



# THE VALLEY PATRIOT

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2021

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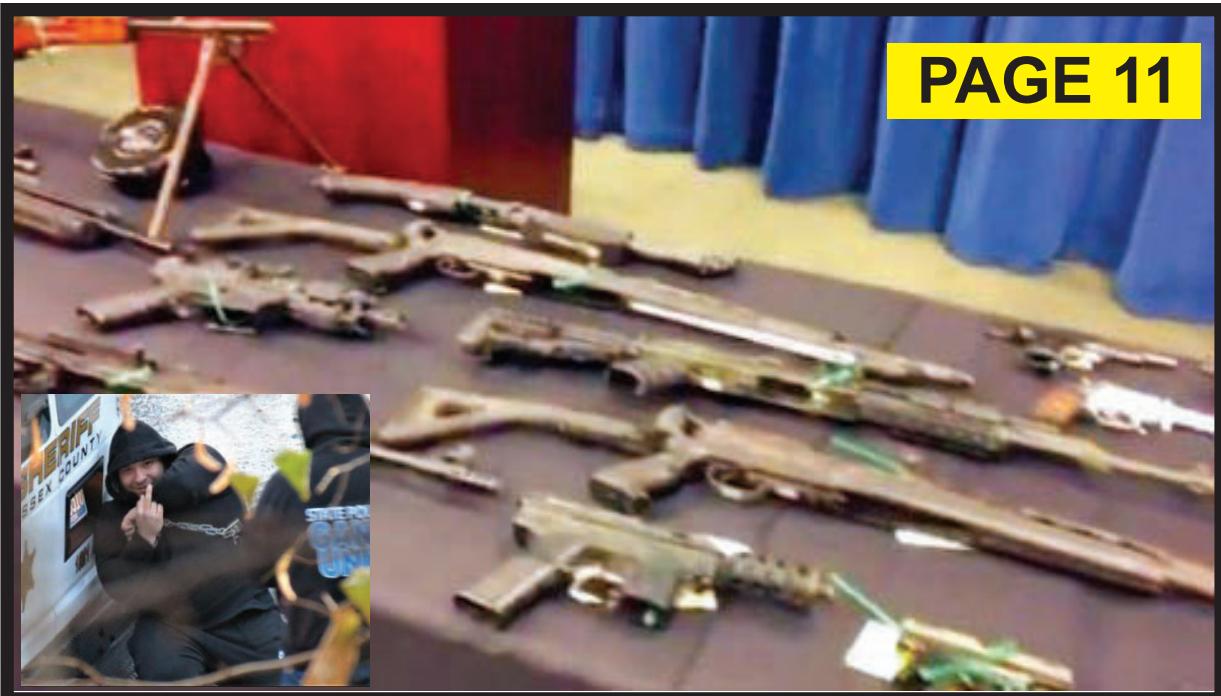
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## Lawrence Gang Member Pleads Guilty

Trinitarios Gang Members Trafficked in Firearms, Ammunition, & Crack Cocaine



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## VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

Don Jussaume, A Combat Medic and an Incoming Rocket!

John Cuddy

VALLEY PATRIOT HERO REPORTER

DRACUT - Dracut native, Don Jussaume was drafted shortly after graduating from Dracut High School with the class of 1966. Not interested in college, he started working in construction after high school. On his birthday during the month of May in 1967, he found two pieces of US Mail

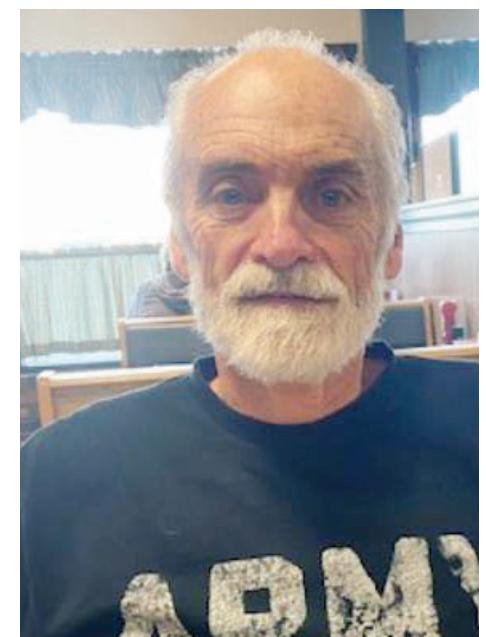
waiting on him when he arrived home from work. One was a birthday card, the other, his draft notice.

At the time, Don was dating a young woman from the "Little Canada" section of Lowell. He was working in construction, dating a very nice young lady; military service was not on his agenda. After his induction and physical in Boston, he reported for basic military training at Fort Dix, New

Jersey. Don was randomly assigned as a US Army Medic, no one interviewed him or asked, they just informed him that he was going to serve as a Medic. Don was sent to Texas and spent ten weeks at Fort Sam Houston being trained as a Medic. He and his future wife Jeannette became engaged after he completed Advanced Individual Training at the base.

His next stop was the First Infantry Division, known to Veterans, as the Big Red One, in Vietnam. There he was assigned to Company B of the First Medical Battalion. In combat, an Infantryman who is wounded, is first treated on the battlefield, by a field medic, or often by his squad. Sometimes, a soldier's wounds were even bandaged by the injured soldier, himself. After to further treat the wounded soldier, his comrades would then call for a medivac helicopter, a severely wounded soldier might have been flown directly to a major Military Hospital, if one was nearby.

Basic medical care was provided at an aid station, which is located at a base camp. The next level of treatment is at a clearing hospital. During the Vietnam war, clearing hospitals were strategically placed throughout the area of operation in Vietnam, so a wounded soldier needed only a short helicopter flight. Most wounded servicemen were treated at a clearing hospital. Slightly



wounded soldiers were sometimes discharged and returned to their unit from the clearing hospital. The clearing hospital Don was at, were staffed by three doctors. However, if the medical team suspected internal injuries, the soldier was flown to a larger Military Hospital, after he was stabilized.

Don was amazed that, young men in their teens and twenties, drafted shortly after completing high school, were given just ten weeks of medical training. These Soldiers, often without interest or aptitude for medical care, were then assigned as Medics.

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# Loss of Charlie Baker Catastrophic for Massachusetts

While conservatives and Republicans in Massachusetts have been rightfully angry with Governor Charlie Baker over the years, their celebration of his departure from governor's race next year is very short sighted.

Yes, Baker initially campaigned for governor as a fiscal conservative and a social moderate, and then abandoned all of those principals once he took office.

Yes, Baker has embraced the authoritarian lockdowns and other restrictive health measures that have proven to be ineffective.

And Yes, Charlie Baker has single handedly divided the Massachusetts Republican party by partaking in the

anti-Trump hysteria of the last five years and trying to rig the state GOP elections for party leadership.

Having said that, however, Charlie Baker is the only reason the "defund the police" movement has not taken hold here in Massachusetts.

He has single handedly held back the left-wing lunatics who want riots in the streets, steep tax hikes, more social programs, parole for vicious killers, racism in the schools, and racist requirements for government benefits.

In short, without Charlie Baker on the ballot next year for governor, it's almost certain that the state Democrat Party will once again control the executive branch of state government.

For all of his faults as governor, Charlie Baker stabilized the state budget, fought for additional police funding, longer sentences for criminals, kept tax hikes to a minimum - and by virtue of holding that office - stopped the Ayana Pressley's and the hate-America crowd from destroying state government from within. In short, he stopped the same people who destroyed New York and California.

Sure, Republican Goeff Diehl would be a great governor if he could actually win a general election.

Nothing would make us happier than if Diehl would replace Baker for governor in 2022.

Unfortunately, Deihl already has the endorsement of Donald

Trump in this race. To the left-wing Massachusetts voters, that's the equivalent of having the endorsement of former KKK leader David Duke.

Those TV commercials write themselves.

While we understand the reasons most Republicans and conservatives in Massachusetts hate Charlie Baker, his departure from this race is nothing to celebrate, in fact, it's downright catastrophic.

Two years from now, Charlie Baker will have a better job, that pays more, and has fewer headaches.

The rest of us, however, will be suffering under the dictates of the racist crazies in the Massachusetts Democratic Party. ♦

## House Supports Funding for Immediate Needs in Methuen and Haverhill

**Linda Dean Campbell**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

After months of public input, the Massachusetts House of Representatives passed a major \$3.82 billion funding bill to address the most pressing challenges of our COVID-19 recovery. This bill prioritizes individuals and businesses that were most impacted by the pandemic and invests in areas of immediate need – such as workforce development, small business support, education, health facilities, housing, food security, and environmental protection.

The bill draws from a combination of federal relief funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and state surplus dollars from the previous fiscal year. Additional ARPA funds remain to be allocated at a later time. Allocating the funds in stages will allow the Legislature to reassess how these dollars can make the greatest impact as our economy recovers. It will also allow for continued public input to guide these

major investments.

This bill includes significant funding for Methuen, Haverhill, and the Merrimack Valley. With the support of our Merrimack Valley delegation, I was proud to secure \$500,000 for major wastewater infrastructure projects in Methuen to prevent combined sewer overflows (CSOs) into the Merrimack River. The bill includes an additional \$100 million for water and sewer projects that will be distributed to communities as grants.

I was also proud to support successful amendments for UTEC's food distribution efforts in the Merrimack Valley (filed by Rep. Frank Moran); Groundwork Lawrence's tree planting initiative in Lawrence and Methuen (filed by Rep. Marcos Devers); and local projects in Haverhill, including food pantry assistance, violence prevention, emergency aid, and Winnekenni Park improvements (filed by Rep. Andy Vargas).

Additional highlights of the House bill include:

- \$500 million to replenish the

Unemployment Trust Fund

- \$500 million to provide bonuses to essential workers who worked in-person during the COVID-19 State of Emergency
- \$500 million for housing supports and affordable housing production
- \$260 million in tax relief and grants for small businesses
- \$250 million to support financially strained hospitals
- \$250 million for behavioral health and addiction treatment services
- \$150 million to promote employment through workforce skills training
- \$100 million for public school districts to create safe learning environments
- \$78 million to address food insecurity
- \$50 million to expand secure Internet access statewide
- Funding to create a public database and website to track spending, ensuring accountable, equitable, and responsible investments

The House and Senate are currently

undergoing negotiations to send a final version of the bill to Governor Baker's desk.

Additionally, more than \$9 billion in funding for infrastructure will soon be on its way to Massachusetts from the federal infrastructure bill that President Biden has signed into law. This funding will go toward highway improvements, public transportation, combined sewer overflow mitigation, broadband access, and much more. We will continue to partner with our federal delegation to ensure that this funding addresses critical needs in the Merrimack Valley. Through smart investments, we can ensure a strong recovery.

State Representative Linda Dean Campbell represents the cities of Methuen and Haverhill in the State Legislature. She serves as House Chair of the Joint Committee on Advanced IT, the Internet and Cybersecurity and as Chair of the Special Joint Oversight Committee on the Holyoke Soldiers' Home COVID-19 Outbreak. She can be reached at Linda.Campbell@mahouse.gov or (617) 722-2380. ♦

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# Lawrence Mayor Brian DePena Hits the Ground Running

Each Month The Valley Patriot will spotlight Lawrence's new Mayor Brian DePena and his efforts to revitalize Lawrence. DePena took office last month after defeating Acting-Mayor Kendrys Vasquez. Vasquez was filling the term of Dan Rivera, who abandoned his job to take a position with Republican Governor Charlie Baker.

## MAYOR NAMES TRANSITION TEAM

Upon being sworn in last month, Mayor DePena hired a transition team and hit the ground running right out of the gate.

DePena hired embattled former HR director Frank Bonet as Chief of Staff, Claudia Hoyos as Executive Assistant, Pedro Beato as Special Assistant, Jhovanni Martes as Special Assistant, and Octavia Spanner as Senior Advisor on a volunteer basis.

## MAYOR TOURS MVRTA FREE FARE PROGRAM

Mayor DePena said last month that he was very pleased by the unanimous vote of The Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA) Board to go fare-free for all local fixed-route and EZ Trans paratransit services, except for the Boston Commuter bus, starting March 1, 2022, for at least a 2-year pilot.

"Many people in our city count on the MVRTA, particularly the most vulnerable population, our elderly and disabled population, and low-income residents. I am glad that the Board extended the fare-free program. Our administration is contemplating the idea of expanding this program in the future," said Mayor DePena.

This pilot is an expansion of the already fare-free routes 34 (Prospect Hill), 37 (Beacon Street), and 85 (Lawrence Downtown Shuttle) since September 2019. It is supported with funding from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act.

"The decision to waive fares for Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority riders is a game-changer for folks across the region who rely on public transit for their commutes. I was proud to vote for the CARES Act last year and applaud the Board for putting funding from the relief package to use helping Merrimack Valley residents and small businesses working to recover from the pandemic," Congresswoman Trahan explains.

Some of the many advantages of a fare-free transit system include winning back riders who stopped riding during the COVID-19 pandemic, returning dollars to the local economy, increased access for people having a hard time affording transportation, faster, and more efficient trips, and reduced conflicts between drivers and passengers.

In addition, another factor supporting the budget-conscious Board's decision to go fare-free is the high cost and inefficiency of collecting fares. As MVRTA Administrator Noah Berger noted, "for every dollar, we collect in fares, we only see less than 24 cents when the fully allocated costs of collecting fares are factored in."

The MVRTA was one of the state's early adopters of fare-free service after the City of Lawrence funded fare-free service on three local bus routes – the 34 to Prospect Hill, the 37 along Beacon Street, and the 85 Downtown Shuttle – in the fall of 2019. All three of those routes run every 30 minutes on weekdays and hourly on Saturdays.

## MAYOR AND GOVERNOR FOCUS ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN LAWRENCE

### Mayor Welcomes State Funding for Economic and Community Development

On Thursday, December 2nd, Mayor Brian A. DePena joined Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Mike Kenneal, MassDevelopment CEO Dan Rivera, the Lawrence State Delegation, and city officials to celebrate new funding awarded through Community One Stop for Growth.

Lawrence CommunityWorks received two awards through the One-Stop, a \$455,000 grant through the new Underutilized Properties Program, and a \$100,000 Urban Agenda grant, while the City of Lawrence was awarded \$750,000 from the Site Readiness Program.

"Our administration is grateful for the support that the city and our Lawrence CommunityWorks partners have received through the One-Stop for Growth Grant Program. The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted our businesses and community development, and this support will help us continue to advance these critical economic and community development projects," said the mayor.

"Through the One Stop for Growth, we are pleased to partner with both local organizations like Lawrence CommunityWorks and municipalities like the City of Lawrence to support a range of initiatives from concept to construction," said Governor Charlie Baker. "Through these three awards, our Administration can continue to support locally driven plans that unlock new opportunities for economic and community development."

### MARRINER BUILDING

The non-profit Lawrence CommunityWorks is redeveloping the 450,000 square foot Marriner Building at 602-610 Broadway into a mixed-use facility and will use a \$455,000 Underutilized Properties Program award to continue renovating the ground floor into commercial space.

Making the ground-floor space tenant-ready will allow for potential additional revenue streams to support the ongoing project, which includes two distinct housing components. In July, the Department of Housing and Community Development made an affordable rental housing award to Trinity Financial in support of one of those housing developments, which will result in 87 total units of new housing. Previously, MassDevelopment also provided awards from the Commonwealth's Brownfields Redevelopment Fund in FY18 (\$88,770) and FY21 (\$88,940) and Site Readiness Program in FY18 (\$50,000), FY20 (\$250,000), and FY21 (\$135,000) to support redevelopment of the Marriner Building.

### DYEWORKS BUILDING

Lawrence CommunityWorks also received a \$100,000 Urban Agenda grant to support the transformative development of the historic, 35,000 square foot single-story DyeWorks building and surrounding East Island neighborhood. Anchored by a LatinX-owned and -oriented healthy supermarket, the DyeWorks project will include pharmacy, nutrition, and behavioral health services offered by the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center (GLFHC) and incorporate financial capability and youth development services provided on-site by LCW's experienced program staff. The Urban



Newly elected Lawrence Mayor Brian DePena rides on the MVRTA new Free Fare Line



Mayor DePena and former Mayor Dan Rivera at Merrimac Paper.

Agenda funds will be used to hire a Project Director, who will support capital campaign activities and consulting services, and move the project into the next stage of the redevelopment process.

### \$750,000 for MERRIMAC PAPER

The City of Lawrence will use a \$750,000 Site Readiness Program grant for work at the Merrimac Paper Site at 7, 9, and 16 South Canal Street by leveraging \$1,650,000 in additional funding to support building demolition. The redevelopment of the area has been a long-term goal for Lawrence and is targeted for light industrial uses.

"My administration is grateful for the support the city and our partners at Lawrence CommunityWorks have received through the Community One Stop for Growth Program," Mayor Brian A. DePena said.

"The COVID-19 Pandemic has negatively impacted the progress of small business growth and development activity in Lawrence. This support will help us continue to advance these important housing and economic development projects."

"It is inspiring to see the Commonwealth's economic development agencies collaborate with the community in Lawrence in such a meaningful way," said Representative Marcos A. Devers. "These projects will address critical needs in our city, and I look forward to seeing them completed."

### MAYOR WORKING WITH HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL

Mayor DePena is actively working with professors and students at Harvard

Kennedy School to work on housing and education in Lawrence. The mayor is also working with the school to help improve economic development.

"I know people think we need more low-income housing but what Lawrence really needs is market rate housing and new businesses. We need to find a way to bring them here but also keep them here," he told The Valley Patriot in an exclusive interview.

Here is the outline the mayor is looking at developing as the partnership moves forward:

#### 1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The student will focus on assessing the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Lawrence. He/she will explore the current state of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Lawrence by preparing an inventory of the number/type of businesses as well as an understanding of their growth needs.

Student will also focus on what are the challenge to business starts ups and business in their early-growth stage.

The background research will result in the student recommending the elements of an entrepreneurial ecosystem including capacity building, capital access and identification of business growth opportunities (e.g., procurement). The goal is to create economic development policy that focuses on incumbent assets of the city's residents.

#### 2. HOUSING

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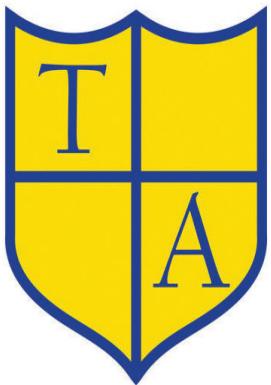
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**HEROES AND BOZOS OF 2021**  
 Every year at this time we look back to see who among us were the heroes and bozos in our community.

#### BOZO - KENDRYS VASQUEZ

I always liked Kendrys and I hope his loss in this year's mayor's race becomes a learning moment for him. He makes this year's BOZO list for two reasons. First, Kendrys was far too enthralled with the pageantry and politics of being an elected official than actually solving problems. Second, when a member of the state's board of education said that Lawrence was neither ready nor capable of controlling their school system (because of Lawrence's massive failures) Vasquez called his comments "racist" to distract the media from the fact that the Lawrence Public Schools are not, and have not been, adequately educating the children of Lawrence. He didn't want the media to focus on the failures of teacher and administrators because they were all campaigning for him. Lawrence school children were just a prop in his quest for political greatness. Everyone noticed the racism accusation. Nobody noticed the fact that the state called out Lawrence officials for refusing to lead and refusing to educate.

#### HERO - LAWRENCE MAYOR BRIAN DEPENA

From the minute he found out that he won the mayor's race in November, DePena was on the phone with movers and shakers in the world of homeless advocates. DePena has long been a friend to the homeless, bringing food to TMF's Family Dinner for the Homeless, voting to allow TMF to stay at the bus station on Common Street, and working as a city councilor to help find housing and clothing for those most in need. As mayor, DePena has put together an ad-hoc committee to combat homelessness and addiction in Lawrence. If that's not worth a HERO mention in my notebook, nothing does.

#### ANDOVER'S FRANK LICATTA

He's a bully, annoying, engages in disgraceful political tactics, and he just won't go away. Like a little yipping dog, Licatta nips at the heels of any republican elected official or political operative who happens to support state party chairman Jim Lyons, or GOP candidate for governor Geoff Diehl. What's his beef? Well, he's really the lapdog (poodle?) of Ayyadurai Shiva. Shiva is the guy who pretends to be a conservative republican but runs against every conservative he can to divide the votes and help the democrats. They are both political



**THANK YOU RONNIE!** Each year on Veterans Day, former Methuen City Councilor Ron Marsan pays for breakfast for any veterans who shows up at Country Kitchen on Hampshire Street.

insurgents whose only function is to create chaos and suppress donors to the party. You can't find bigger BOZOS than these two... even in Methuen.

#### HEROS - THE VOLUNTEERS OF TMF

Michael Gorman and a group of about 20 volunteers as part of The Movement Family feed up to 100 homeless individuals every Wednesday in Lawrence. They provide clothing, health services, haircuts, and other amenities that are needed by homeless addicts on the streets. The best part is that they do it with zero help from the government. That's right, state, federal, and local government officials do nothing for the homeless in Lawrence, so these brave volunteers decided to do it themselves.

#### HERO - LAWRENCE CITY COUNCILOR MARC LAPLANTE

Marc LaPlante is a Lawrence City Councilor from District "F" - the South Lawrence East section of the city. In his spare time, he researches the history of WWI veterans and has amazing work making sure those soldiers from Lawrence who lost their lives in WWI are recognized with signs and dedications all over the city. He even wrote a book to honor those veterans. Marc is, for sure, a community hero and he is rarely recognized for it.

#### HERO - METHUEN MAYOR NEIL PERRY

You have to hand it to him, Methuen Mayor Neil Perry may have turned into just another political hack, taking

care of his enemies, and crapping all over the people who support him, but nobody can deny he has done an amazing job at making local government more efficient for the average Methuen voter. Sure, he has had a lot of help from the state and federal government by way of very generous grants, but Perry also cut costs out of the budget, streamlined city services, and managed the city budget better than any mayor in the last 30 years.

#### HERO - DEE O'NEIL

#### BOZOS - EAGLE TRIBUNE

Dee O'Neil is a former addict who cleaned up her act and now gives back to the community by providing meals to veterans and the homeless in Haverhill five days a week. This year she decided that, because city officials are not doing enough for the homeless and veteran population in her city, she was going to run for city council and be their advocate in city government. Unfortunately, her story of redemption was flipped on its head by the Eagle Tribune, which wrote a front-page story on all her brushes with the law while she was addicted. It was clear from reading the story that it was designed to sink her political campaign, which it did. Meanwhile, there were at least five other candidates on the ballot the same day in other communities who have similar brushes with the law, but the records of those candidates didn't get highlighted in the daily paper. Things that make you go hmmmm.

#### BOZO - FORMER LAWRENCE MAYOR DAN RIVERA

Even though he ran for a four-year term - thereby committing to the people of Lawrence to lead them for four years - Dan Rivera has abandoned the city in his final year as mayor to take a job with Republican Governor Charlie Baker. But, now, a few months into his new job,

#### WINSTON SAYS!



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Baker announced he is not running for reelection in 2022. You might think he would tell Dan that before he jumped ship to take the job but I'm betting that he didn't.

#### BOZOS - THE VOTERS OF METHUEN

Mayor Perry ran for reelection this year with no opposition. So did Methuen councilors Saba, Zeigler, McCarty, and Faretra, as well as the entire six member Methuen School Committee. There was only one challenger in the at-large council race and only one challenger in the West district race. On election day only about 11% of the registered voters bothered to show up. With all the scandals of past years, and the number of immoral people holding elected office in Methuen, you might think that Methuen voters (and particularly Methuen parents) would be storming the ballot to change the leadership on the school committee and city council. But, they didn't. Remember when all these scandals started (that we are just now learning about) there was the same dynamic in Methuen city government. Nobody running, nobody voting. That's because elected and appointed officials know they can get away with murder when the voters don't care to pay attention. What will we unearth 3 years from now when people actually start paying attention again? Whatever it is, the Methuen voters only have yourselves to blame.

#### HERO - VILMA LORA-MARTINEZ-DOMINGUES

She ran for mayor of Lawrence and she

NOTEBOOK: NEXT PAGE



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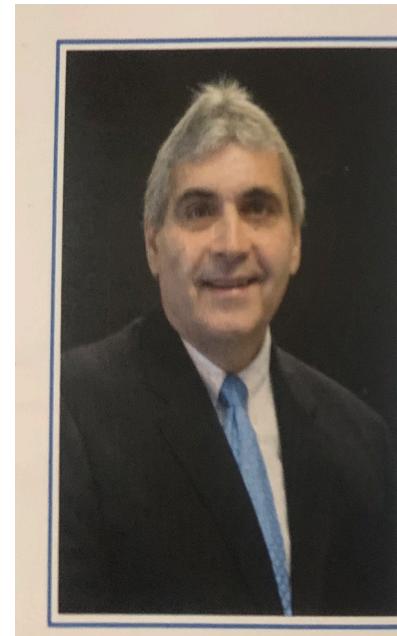
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**NOTEBOOK: FROM PREVIOUS PAGE**

ran a classy campaign. I may not agree with Vilma on many issues, but she truly cares about her city, and it showed in the way she handled herself on the campaign trail. I have a feeling we have not seen the last of Vilma on the campaign trail and that's probably a good thing for Lawrence.

**BOZO CHARLIE BAKER**

You all know I am the last person in the world who still supports Charlie Baker, but let's face it, the way he treated purple heart recipient and hero Marine Francisco Urena (as Secretary of Veteran Affairs) was disgraceful. First, he blamed Francisco for the deaths of veterans in the Old Soldiers Home in Holyoke. He did so after commissioning a bogus investigation conducted by a friend and lawyer who does business with the state. Secondly, when information started to come out showing Urena had nothing to do with the veterans' deaths, and that he was the only one who was trying to stop the deaths from occurring, Charlie never stepped up to the plate to do the right thing and apologize to Francisco Urena. He never fired the person really responsible. TOTAL BOZO move Charlie! You know, and now everyone knows that Francisco was a scapegoat for the misdeeds of others in the Baker administration.

**HERO AMESBURY MAYOR JIM KELCOURSE**

He's the big engine that could. Standing more than 6 feet tall, Jim Kelcourse first ran and won a seat on the Amesbury city council. He then ran for state senate in a primary against Katie Ives and lost. Then he ran for state representative and won. Now, Jim seems to have found his niche being elected the new mayor of Amesbury. Kelcourse has always been a happy-go-lucky guy, and I always said he would be a much better mayor or governor than a legislator. Now he is where he can do the most good, helping real people with their problems at the local level.

**HERO MIKE DOWNS**

He's a veteran who decided to run for office at the local level and challenged two incumbents on the Methuen City Council. He never got down in the weeds, attacked his political opponents, or took part in some of the name calling that goes on in Methuen.

At every turn he stayed above the fray and on top of all that, this hero Air Force veteran is still helping other vets here at home in his own quiet way. Most people don't notice what he has done locally for those in need, but I noticed it, and I'm happy to list him as a hero in our community.

**HERO - METHUEN COUNCILOR EUNICE ZEIGLER**

Most people may not know that Methuen Councilor Eunice Zeigler has periodically come to the TMF Family dinners for the homeless to perform for the homeless for free during the dinner. She has been seen serving them food and donating needed items and never once asked for any credit for it (unlike other politicians).

**\*\*\*\*HERO - LAWRENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEEMAN SANTIAGO CRUZ**

There aren't many brave elected officials in Lawrence when it comes to condemning anti-white racism but Santiago Reyes, Cruz, Jr. stepped up to the plate and did just that last month when it was learned that an anti-white racism group called BlackPrint was recruited to stir up racial division in the Lawrence Schools. The best part is that nobody can call him a racist for doing so because Cruz is Dominican and Puerto Rican. And we all know from the dictates of the Democrat Party that only white people can be racist.

**HERO - METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEEEE - LUANN SANTOS**

As a parent she does a great job on the Methuen School Committee, but Luann gets on the hero list this year because of her endless fundraising for local charities, kids' sports outings, local school activities, and helping those in need. It's hard to find a nicer person in the world of politics. Luann is a true community hero in every sense of the term.

\*\*\*

**ELDER SERVICES CHANGES NAME**

Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley and North Shore, a private nonprofit agency with offices in Lawrence and Danvers, announced today the organization's official rebrand to AgeSpan.

AgeSpan started as an organization in 1974, focused on serving the needs of older adults. Over the years, its programs and services have expanded, and the agency now serves a wide variety of individuals, including seniors, younger people, those with disabilities, veterans, and family members. AgeSpan's service area has grown to include more than 28 diverse communities, as well as helping people statewide and across New England.

As part of the rebrand, the agency has a new website, now at [www.agespan.org](http://www.agespan.org), so it's easier to find information and get help. Users will be automatically directed to the new website even if they use the former Elder Services website name. The agency's addresses and phone numbers remain the same. ♦



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# A look back at 2021 in Dracut

**Brian Genest**

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

People and politics. Hellos and goodbyes. Consistency and change. Here's a look at some of the highlights and happenings of 2021 in Dracut.

In the annual town election, it was déjà vu all over again, again. Selectman Joe DiRocco was re-elected, once again beating perennial candidate Phil Thibault in their third matchup. With this year's defeat, Thibault has lost seven elections for selectman.

When the board reorganized after the election, Selectman Alison Genest was unanimously elected to serve as Chairman. Genest, who previously served as the board's vice chair, took over the gavel from Selectman Jesse Forcier.

In the race for school committee, political newcomer and well-known former teacher Rebecca Duda topped the ticket. Nine-year incumbent Joe Wilkie was elected to a fourth term.

During the annual budget process this year, questions were raised about the proper role of the Finance Committee and Chairman Rich Cowan's handling of the review process, after that board failed to make a recommendation on the \$84 million town budget before it came to selectmen for a vote.

Veteran and volunteer Bob Berube was recognized with the Joseph Bradley Varnum Award for his service to our town and country. Berube, who helped build a military base in Antarctica as a Navy Seabee in the 1960s, is perhaps best known in town for the chick-hatching program he set up and maintained for elementary school students.

It was a record-breaking year for the Dracut Scholarship Foundation. The organization's annual telethon took in more than \$157,000, an all-time record. Every year, the telethon shines a bright spotlight on our community's long-term commitment to helping Dracut High School graduates.

Retired Fire Chief Robert Kohanski died at age 86. Kohanski, who served in the Air Force during the Korea War era, joined the Dracut Fire Department as a volunteer firefighter in 1950 and became a permanent firefighter in 1968. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1972, to Deputy Chief in 1985, and to Chief in 1986. Kohanski was actively involved as a volunteer for many years and served on various boards, including the Dracut Historical Society, St. Francis Parish, and the Lowell Firefighter's Credit Union.

Construction of the Beaver Brook Trail Project was finished with the installation of a wooden pedestrian footbridge over the protected stream crossing that was disrupted when the path was cleared in 2019. Fire Station 3 was opened on Nashua Road. The new state-of-the-art facility has two fully-equipped engines, a brush truck and large apparatus bays with drive-through capabilities. The station includes a training classroom, physical training room and living quarters for firefighters.



There was a renewed focus on economic development in town. Dracut got a bunch of new businesses this year, including Lazy River Products and Tree House Cannabis, retail marijuana dispensaries. In addition, Sweet Luv Bakery, Woah Nellies BBQ & More, and Giving Tree Senior Living all opened their doors. Town Meeting voters also passed a home occupation bylaw, which has resulted in 60 new businesses registering in Dracut. In addition, Dan Phelps has been brought on as Dracut's Economic Development Project Manager, to work on a number of initiatives related to growing and helping the town's business community.

Community gardening took root at the Beaver Brook Farm. This year, for the first time, 18 plots were made available to town residents for growing vegetables and flowers.

There was a leadership change in the Dracut Fire Department. Fire Chief Dave Brouillette retired after 36 years as a town firefighter and Deputy Rich Patterson was promoted to the top job. Three other town firefighters also retired: Lt. John Kohanski, Mark Morowski and Kevin Healey all worked their last shifts this year.

In the Dracut Police Department, Deputy Stephen Chaput retired after 34 years of service as a town police officer.

A former Playboy model was charged with arson and trespassing for allegedly torching two town police cruisers. 43-year-old Alicia Burley pleaded innocent to all charges. She was released on personal recognizance and ordered to undergo a mental health evaluation.

Town Manager Ann Vandal was given a 3-year contract extension and a 3% raise, after getting high scores from the majority of the board on her first performance review. Vandal scored a 3.9, on a scale of 1 to 5.

Three Selectmen gave her scores in the Strong Performance category: Joe DiRocco (4.9), Alison Genest (4.1) and Jesse Forcier (4.0). Selectman Tony Archinski, who voted against hiring Vandal in 2020, gave her a 3.4 rating in the Satisfactory category. Selectman Heather Santiago-Hutchings gave the town manager the lowest score, a 2.9 rating in the Needs Improvement category.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Here's to a great 2022 in Dracut!

—Brian Genest is chairman of the Dracut Republican Town Committee and host of Eye on Dracut on DATV Channel 8. ♦

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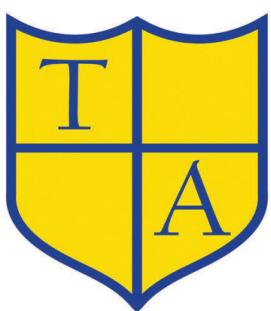
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# Improving Mental Health Care for MA Residents

Hello Valley Patriot Readers,  
Beyond the toll it took on our physical health and economy, the COVID-19 pandemic had a detrimental impact on many people's mental health and created new barriers for those already suffering from mental illness and addiction.

According to a recent survey by the non-profit Kaiser Family Foundation, more than half of adults in the United States reported that their mental health was negatively impacted due to anxiety and stress over the pandemic. Many adults reported difficulty sleeping or eating, increases in alcohol consumption or substance use, and worsening chronic conditions.

Massachusetts residents have historically experienced challenges accessing mental health services due to health inequities and persistent barriers to care, leaving many without the treatment they need and deserve. All too many individuals and families need to travel too far or wait too long to get help.

That is why I am grateful the Massachusetts Senate has made mental

## IN YOUR CORNER with SENATOR DIZOGLIO

health care reform a priority in this legislative session.

We recently passed with unanimous, bipartisan support the Mental Health ABC Act 2.0., comprehensive legislation to reform the way mental health care is delivered in Massachusetts, with the goal of ensuring that people get the mental health care they need when they need it. This legislation's passing comes on the heels of the first Mental Health ABC Act, another piece of mental health care reform which passed the Senate in February 2020.

This bill was driven by the recognition that mental health is as important as physical health for every resident of Massachusetts and should be treated as such. It includes a series of reforms to ensure equitable access to mental health care and remove barriers to care.

Among the measures included in the legislation are:

Guaranteeing an annual mental health

wellness exam at no cost to the patient;

Creating an online portal that enables access to real-time data to move patients from emergency to appropriate care;

Expanding access to psychiatric care by requiring the state-contracted and commercial health plans to cover mental health and substance use disorder benefits offered through the psychiatric collaborative care model; and

Incentivizing investments in acute psychiatric services.

The legislation also includes an amendment I filed to help our veterans who are struggling with PTSD and combat rates of suicide.

A recent national study by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs found deployed veterans have a 41% higher suicide risk compared to the general U.S. population, and a study conducted by the National Alliance on Mental Illness found one in three veterans who enter

the VA health care system are diagnosed with at least one mental health disorder, with about a fifth diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Too many of our courageous veterans go untreated for mental health issues and experience depression that can last a lifetime. More veterans are lost to suicide than killed in the line of duty. We must do all we can to provide mental health services to those who risk their lives to protect us.

I am truly grateful to the many advocates, individuals and families who have fought for changes to our mental health care delivery system and who have never given up in their mission. And I'm hopeful we can get this important legislation to the Governor's desk as soon as possible.

*If you have any questions on this or any other issue, please feel free to contact me anytime via email at Diana.Dizoglio@masenate.gov or phone at 978-984-7747.*

*Yours in service,  
Diana ♦*

## Flag Pays Tribute to Sacrifices Made by WW II Merchant Marine

A neglected chapter of World War II has been recalled in Old Orchard Beach with the donation and prominent display of a flag honoring the memory of a U.S. Merchant Marine from Massachusetts.

As a boy growing up in Lawrence, Massachusetts, Old Orchard Beach resident Dave Twomey lived upstairs from his uncle and former U.S. Merchant Marine George Edmond Tourigny, who told him harrowing stories of his service in the North Atlantic in the early days of the war.

Tourigny was 24 and working as a lineman for the Gardner Electric Light Company in Massachusetts when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, leading to America's entry into World War II. Soon thereafter, Tourigny visited the U.S. Navy Recruiting Station in Gardner to enlist, but the office was swamped with applicants. He was advised that he could eventually be drafted, but that there was another organization in dire need of immediate volunteers called the U.S. Merchant Marines.

He knew little of the Merchant Marines other than it was regarded as a civilian job and that he could be sent to sea, which is what he wanted. Tourigny signed up for the Merchant Marines and was sent to basic training at Sheepshead Bay, New York.

His two-week Merchant Marine training was run by the U.S. Coast Guard and consisted of learning the basic Merchant Marine ranks, protocol, how to abandon ship if needed, and how to row a lifeboat.

Training was given in how to extinguish a fire on board a ship and basic ship deck operations before he was assigned to the commercial vessel called Deer Lodge bound for Iceland. His ship was to be part of a convoy of commercial and hastily manufactured "Liberty" ships transporting tons of vital military supplies for the Allies' war effort

in Europe.

Even though Merchant Marine positions were classified as "non-military" in nature, it turned out to be the most dangerous and perilous service for Americans during World War II. Merchant Marine convoys and ships were often unarmed commercial vessels sailing without military escort and highly vulnerable to German U-boat and aircraft attacks. One in 26 U.S. Merchant Marine seamen died in these attacks, making it the highest fatality rate of any wartime duty for Americans.

Merchant Marines who survived ship sinkings were subjected to fires, explosions, exposure to icy waters, sharks, deadly oil slicks and long hours in lifeboats waiting for rescue.

Although the Merchant Marines had no formal military training, they were a vital component in the supply chain to sustain the early days of the Allies' war capabilities. Merchant Marine seamen such as Tourigny exhibited courage and did their utmost to complete their missions under the most hazardous conditions Americans would experience during the war.

Arriving in Iceland in May 1942, Tourigny's Deer Lodge cargo ship was briefly in port for refueling and then became part of a convoy known as "The Murmansk Run" bound for the port of Murmansk in Russia. Two days out of Iceland on May 18, 1942, an enemy aircraft bombing severely damaged the vessel. No U.S. Merchant Marines died in that attack, but the Deer Lodge ship limped back to port in Iceland for repairs.

After being determined as seaworthy, the Deer Lodge set out again for Murmansk as part of an 11-ship convoy. It made it through to Murmansk, but on the voyage back to Iceland on May 27, 1942, another enemy aircraft bombed and strafed the Deer Lodge ship, with a bomb burning seven of the vessel's 17 crewmen before the vessel somehow



Dave Twomey of Old Orchard Beach, Maine, left, presents a U.S. Merchant Marines flag to Bob Greenlaw, co-owner of the GFB Scottish Pub in Old Orchard Beach on Nov. 11th. The flag is inscribed with the name of Twomey's uncle, the late George Edmond Tourigny of Lawrence, Massachusetts, who served in the Merchant Marines during World War II.

made it back to Iceland.

In early July 1942, Tourigny was reassigned to another freighter, the Olapana, as a deck hand. While on its way to Murmansk carrying fuel and tanks, the Olapana was shelled and then torpedoed, and sank. Tourigny spent 61 hours among other crew survivors in a lifeboat before rescue, and five of his fellow crew members died in that attack.

His next duty in the Merchant Marines came aboard a freighter called the John HB Latrobe that made six successful runs

back and forth to Murmansk before being shelled and damaged in November 1942. Once again Tourigny survived the attack, but two of his shipmates were badly injured.

While home in Gardiner on leave over Christmas, Tourigny received notice that he had been drafted and was to report in January 1943 to Newport, Rhode Island for U.S. Navy boot camp. He trained as a cargo specialist and then entered Officer Candidate School while assigned to the

FLAG: PAGE 11

## KANE'S CORNER

# Lowell Humane Society/Gizmo's Road to Recovery

**KANE**

VALLEY PATRIOT MASCOT

"It takes a team of committed staff, volunteer professionals and community volunteers to assess the unique medical and behavioral needs of each animal in our care to prepare them for adoption. This is our Lowell Humane Society family." -Cassie Nelson, Volunteer Coordinator

The Holiday season is a time for families and friends to come together and a season of giving for those less fortunate. Recently, Kane has had his friend Gizmo on his mind. Unlike Kane, Gizmo does not have a family and has fallen into poor health as he fights the effects of heart worm disease. Gizmo has kept a positive disposition as he pushes through treatment one day at a time. In fact, Gizmo and his foster care family are celebrating this week. Kane asked Gizmo to spill the tea about his reason for celebration. Gizmo said after close to 4 months of required crate rest, Gizmo will be venturing out to spend more time running and playing like other healthy Australian Shepherds his age. He is on the road to recovery.

Although Gizmo's story is a sad one, he truly is loved by a team of Animal Care Professionals, Volunteers, and his Foster Care Family. What do these people have in common besides their love for Gizmo, well they are members of the Lowell Humane Society family. Kane had the pleasure of meeting two professionals, Cassie Nelson Volunteer Coordinator and Dog Whisperer Amanda Merrill, Animal Care Specialist. In fact, they were working Thanksgiving Day. Being

an animal professional requires coverage 365 days a year, because a pup has to eat. Since Kane knew these professionals are important, he knew he should dress for success for his interview, so he wore his formal black tie.

Kane thought back to first meeting Gizmo in July. He was surrendered to the Lowell Humane Society due to an overabundance of animals needing care in his home. His family was unable to care for all the animals' needs. Gizmo arrived with his Senior Citizen friend Willy. Gizmo explained to Kane that his transition was made easier by having time walking with Willy and playing with Willy, staff, and volunteers in the play yard. Then things changed. Willy was adopted and Gizmo was diagnosed with heart worm disease. Although Gizmo was scared, he knew that his new friends developed a plan for him to regain his health and he trusted them with his care. Kane thinks Gizmo is very brave. Kane wanted to learn who all these wonderful people were helping Gizmo, so he set up an appointment to interview Cassie Nelson, Volunteer Coordinator at the Lowell Humane Society. Cassie sure has a friendly face and solid handshake so Kane felt comfortable asking all kinds of questions. Kane learned that the Lowell Humane Society runs solely on donations to pay for the care of more than 1,000



animals annually. They are a non-profit organization. Wow, Kane thought that was a lot of animals. So, then Cassie explained the key to success was all sort of volunteers. There are volunteers that fund raise, clean, run events, provide food, water, love, attention, and walk the dogs, care for cats, furry small animals, and featured animals in their care.

Cassie explained to Kane that other essential members of the care team are volunteer Veterinarians that donate their team for the medical care of the animals in the shelter. This could be general checkups to complex surgeries. The Chelmsford Animal hospital has

been instrumental in following Gizmo's journey back to health. The other key position has been foster care families who open up their homes to the animals so they can experience living with a family before their adoption. Gizmo has been living with Tom and his family who have provided care according to his medical treatment plan for two months. Other dogs are placed in foster care to learn how to behave well in a family environment to pave their way to a successful adoption. Kane blushed; he wondered if Cassie knew that sometimes he takes food off the counter, but that confession was for another day. Hmmm maybe it is Amanda and that he should

tell her about that or "keep it a super secret."

Kane thinks that Gizmo is in wonderful care. Kane is hopeful that he will continue to get stronger and be ready for a family of his own. When Gizmo is ready Kane would like to get together with him to split a chicken sandwich. This year Gizmo is the star of Giving Tuesday which is a fundraiser that helps pay for the medical needs of dogs, cats, and small animals in the care of the Lowell Humane Society. Kane thought this made Gizmo kind of famous and wished he got his paw print autograph. Maybe next time.

Kane decided he would like to get more involved in helping pups and other homeless animals like Gizmo. This year alone medical expenses have totaled more than \$50,000. He learned the ways to get involved include attending a volunteer meeting then deciding if you would like to help with marketing, event planning, direct animal care, or walking pups like Gizmo. Also, the Lowell Humane Society is accepting donations for animal care. A key component of the rehabilitation process is foster care families. Currently the Lowell Humane Society is accepting applications from families interested in providing foster care. For more information, please contact the Lowell Humane Society at 978-452-7781 or by email at info@lowellhumane.org.

In the meantime, Kane would like you to have a wonderful Holiday season and remember those less fortunate. Nothing feels better than helping those in need.

Woof

Kane Peaslee, Valley Patriot Columnist◊

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# It's Time for the Healing to Begin in Lawrence

**Santiago Reyes Cruz, Jr.**  
PART OWNER, VALLEY PATRIOT

What's next for Lawrence? Election season is finally over. Former City Councilor Brian DePena has officially been sworn in as the new Mayor of Lawrence and will serve until 2026. DePena is a local Dominican businessman who has a clear strategy as to how he'll improve the city.

What does the Mayor's plan look like?

The plan is simple and executable because DePena really doesn't care about politics, who is connected to whom, or who has a bad reputation. He is focused only on solving the problems facing our city. The Mayor's strategy plan is aimed

Proving once again that he cares more about getting things done, and less about the petty politics of division, Mayor DePena has tasked Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan to head an ad-hoc committee to combat homelessness and addiction. The only people surprised by this are those who know nothing about Lawrence, Duggan, or Mayor DePena.

~ Santiago Reyes-Cruz, Jr.  
Dist. "B" School Committeeman-elect



at making Lawrence a healthier & safer place for all kids to be raised in. He will fight hard to educate & save kids from being recruited by negative influences such as activist teachers, gangs, drugs,

and racist community activists.

The following are four points which will be used to combat such negative influences:

#1 The Mayor plans to work with

parents to enroll kids in after school programs such as Lawrence C.A.R.E.S. The acronym C.A.R.E.S stands for Citizens Actively Restoring Essential Surroundings. Because the Lawrence Schools are doing such a terrible job educating our children, it's clear that more needs to be done outside of the regular school day to prepare our children for success. Mayor DePena gets that and is ready to implement "outside the box" solutions.

#2 Mayor DePena has tasked Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan to work on homeless issues as head of an ad-hoc

SANTIAGO: PAGE 12

## Trinitarios Gang Member from Lawrence Pleads Guilty to Trafficking Multiple Guns, Ammunition, Cocaine & Crack

BOSTON – A member of the Trinitarios street gang pleaded guilty yesterday in federal court in Boston in connection with trafficking firearms, ammunition, cocaine, and crack cocaine in the Greater Lawrence area.

Jose Omar Hernandez-Aragones, 24, a Dominican national residing in Lawrence, pleaded guilty to four counts of being a felon in possession of a firearm; one count of possession with intent to distribute and distribution of cocaine; and one count of possession with intent to distribute and distribution of cocaine base, commonly known as crack cocaine. U.S. District Court Judge Leo T. Sorokin scheduled sentencing for March 22, 2022.

Hernandez-Aragones was indicted and arrested in November 2019 as part of a federal sweep targeting federal and state offenders, including members and associates of the Trinitarios street gang, in the Greater Lawrence area.

The Valley Patriot was on the scene as a joint task force arrested the gang members in 2019.

Beginning in 2017, law enforcement conducted an investigation into the members, associates, and suppliers of the Trinitarios operating in the Greater Lawrence area. The Trinitarios is a street gang originating in the New York area with increased presence in Lawrence and

the surrounding communities. According to court documents, many Trinitarios members are involved in a broad range of illegal activities including, but not limited to, firearms and drug trafficking as well as violent crimes undertaken to protect the interests of the gang and its members.

During the investigation, Hernandez-Aragones was identified as a member of the Trinitarios. On four separate occasions between May and July 2018, Hernandez-Aragones sold at least nine guns, ammunition, cocaine, and crack cocaine to a cooperating witness. Specifically, Hernandez-Aragones sold the cooperating witness two handguns and ammunition for \$1,900 on May 16, 2018; a bulletproof vest, a loaded 9 mm handgun, a SKS rifle and a magazine containing ammunition for the rifle on June 4, 2018; two handguns and approximately 55.4 grams of a substance containing cocaine July 3, 2018; as well as three guns, one of which was stolen, and approximately 8.7 grams of a substance containing crack cocaine on July 13, 2018. Hernandez-Aragones is prohibited from possessing firearms and ammunition due to a 2016 conviction of assault that was punishable by more than one year in prison.

The charge of being a felon in possession of a firearm provides for a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, up to



three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of distribution and possession with intent to distribute cocaine or cocaine base provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, at least three years and up to a lifetime of supervised release and a fine of up to \$1 million. Sentences are imposed by a federal district judge based on the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division;

James Ferguson, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Boston Field Division; Matthew B. Mollhollin, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations, Boston Field Division; Essex County District Attorney Jonathan W. Blodgett; Colonel Christopher Mason, Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police; Commissioner Carol Mici of the Massachusetts Department of Corrections; and Lawrence Police Chief Roy P. Vasque made the announcement. Assistant U.S. Attorney John Mulcahy of Mendell's Criminal Division is prosecuting the case.◊

## FLAG: FROM PAGE 9

Norfolk Naval Base for the duration of the war, rising to the rank of U.S. Navy Lieutenant.

Following his military service, Tourigny moved from Gardner to Lawrence, married his wife Rita and the couple raised seven children. He owned a construction company and died in 2001 at the age of 83.

Several years ago, Twomey was visiting the GFB Scottish Pub in Old Orchard Beach when he couldn't help but notice an array of colorful military flags hanging from the ceiling there. One flag was missing though, that of the U.S. Merchant Marines, so Twomey asked the pub's owners, Bob, and Kelly Greenlaw, if he could donate a Merchant Marine flag inscribed with Tourigny's name and hang it alongside the others there.

The Greenlaws agreed and Twomey had the flag made and it is now part of the GFB Scottish Pub's permanent display of flags.

"We support all military branches and

consider the Merchant Marines to be a real part of our war effort in World War II and what they did showed courage and patriotism," Bob Greenlaw said. "We're very pleased that this flag will join other military flags now at the pub and we're grateful to Dave Twomey for remembering his uncle and the contributions of the Merchant Marines through this project."

Twomey said he was grateful to be able to donate the flag to honor the memory of Tourigny's service in the U.S. Merchant Marines.

"If my uncle was here today, he would be very proud to see that flag hanging in the pub," Twomey said. "It's been quite a process to see this project through from start to finish but it's been worth it to see the Merchant Marines' bravery and courage during World War II recognized in this way. Their contributions have been largely forgotten and this flag certainly keeps the memory of my uncle and other Merchant Marines alive."◊

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## SANTIAGO: FROM PAGE 11

homelessness committee. There is no doubt that homelessness and addiction have ravaged the city over the last 5 years. Previous mayors ignored the problem, making it far worse for all of us. With this one move alone, Mayor DePena has shown that he cares more about getting things done and solving problems than appeasing the political insiders.

#3 The Mayor is working with outside education institutions to orientate people on local environmentalism and housing (see page 4). Reducing the amount of litter and vacant properties which have scarred the city is a top priority. DePena is already working with his team to clean up the city and working with Harvard to address the property issues. Neighborhood and park clean ups are great for one day, but to truly clean up the city it is going to take the full effort of DPW, Inspectional Services, and the general public.

# 4 The Mayor plans on strengthening relationships with surrounding cities to address common areas of concern.

There is no reason why Lawrence has to be burdened with providing all of the methadone clinics and social services needed by residents of the rest of the Merrimack Valley.

Many of Lawrence's problem come from Methuen, Andover, and other cities. Mayor DePena understands there needs to be a regional approach to issues like prostitution, homelessness, gang violence, and drug distribution - forcing other communities to work with us on solving these problems and taking responsibility for their own citizens who end up in Lawrence looking for help.

There are some politicians who promise you the world to get elected and then do nothing to solve any real problems once they get in.

Mayor DePena only promised one thing, to put the people first. So far, however, he has already shown he is doing so much more.

All this will surely help beautify the City of Lawrence MA.

I am excited to see the city grow! ♦

## Stadium Chiropractic



## NEW LOCATION! 2 DURSO AVE BEHIND TACO BELL IN LAWRENCE

Dr. John Armano is pleased to announce the opening of Stadium Chiropractic PC located at 2 Durso Ave in Lawrence, adjacent to the Registry of Motor Vehicles behind Taco Bell. Dr. John Armano has been serving the Merrimack Valley for the past 31 years specializing in injury rehab sports medicine, as well as pain management for acute and chronic conditions. Dr. Cindy Armano has been serving Boston's North shore for the past 31 years also specializing in injury rehab, as well as family care and nutritional counseling. PHONE: (508) 350-7036. Se Habla Espanol.

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Sunday: 12noon - 9:30pm



METHUEN -- Police Chief Scott McNamara welcomed the newest member of the MPD, Officer Steven DiLeo. DiLeo graduated from the Northern Essex Community College (NECC) Police Academy on Friday, Nov. 19th, where he received the physical fitness award. Officer DiLeo is a lifelong Methuen resident. He is a 2013 graduate of Methuen High, and went on to serve six years in the U.S. Army Reserves while also working as a member of the grounds crew at NECC.



Methuen welcomed two new dispatchers this month who graduated from the State 911 Department Public Safety Communications Academy. Yenifer Cabreja and Larissa Alves both started in new roles with the MPD this month after graduating from the academy run by the State 911 Department. Both dispatchers speak multiple languages. Dispatcher Alves speaks Brazilian Portuguese, Spanish and English fluently. Dispatcher Cabreja speaks both Spanish and English fluently.



Kids from Tewksbury High School's basketball team joined "The Movement Family" (TMF) in Lawrence last month to help feed and service the homeless at 2 South Broadway in Lawrence. The team served food and talked with homeless individuals about how they ended up on the streets and saw first hand what addiction has done to so many people.



"It's great to be 100," resident Anthony DeFusco told us as he was surrounded by family, the Mayor of Methuen, Neil Perry, members of the Fire and Police Departments as well as a representative from the U.S Marine Corps. When Mayor Perry's office became aware that a Marine living at Methuen Village was turning 100, his team put together a motorcade of Police Cruisers and Fire Engines along with a representative of the Marines. They came bearing gifts and the Mayor presented him with a proclamation. Happy Birthday Tony, we were so happy to spend the day with you.

## HERO: FROM PAGE 1

In the United States, the enlisted Medics usually worked under direct supervision of nurses and doctors, who were commissioned officers. But, in the field, during combat operations throughout the Vietnam theater, many enlisted medics performed very complex and often lifesaving medical procedures.

Two of his stories, struck me. The first was a rocket attack, hearing the incoming rockets, Don took cover under a bed, near an injured North Vietnamese soldier. The injured Communist soldier was waiting to be transported to a holding area. The rocket hit the roof of the hospital, Don estimated about twenty feet from him, blowing a hole in the roof. He and the wounded North Vietnamese Army, also known as NVA, soldier survived the attack, unscathed. The injured NVA soldier never moved, took cover, or even flinched during the attack. Don respected the NVA soldier's coolness under fire. Telling me, the NVA soldier was "just a young teenager."

On the lighter side, he told me about a fellow soldier, who opened a care package full of hard candy from the United States. Using the candy as "makeup," he pretended he was a woman. The First Sargent sent him for a psychological evaluation, before he could be evaluated, the soldier removed the "makeup," and had the last laugh on their First Sargent.

Don returned from Vietnam, was sent to Fort Hood to finish his term of service, and then married the young woman from Lowell he was dating when drafted, Jeannette. The couple moved back to Dracut and raised their daughter, Sharon. Don went back to construction work after he left the Army, retiring in 2019. His wife passed away a few years back, and he now spends his time involved with his church, St Francis in Dracut, and spending time with his family. A Boy Scout Leader with Troop 25 in Dracut, his grandson Thomas, just reached the rank of Eagle Scout under his guidance.

Ironically, he served in Vietnam in 1968, and recently with sixty-eight

other Vietnam Veterans, on November 10th, he received the Vietnam Veteran's lapel pin from the Town of Dracut. In September, with twelve other Vietnam Veterans, he made a trip to the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington. The twelve Veterans went to "Harry's Bar," wheeling one of their comrades in his wheelchair into the bar. At the bar, the Veterans met the parents of US Marine Sgt. Nicole Gee, twenty-three years old, recently killed in action in Afghanistan at Kabul Airport. The couple was in town to bury their daughter at Arlington National Cemetery. The Vietnam Veterans were very upset that this couple, who just lost their daughter, were left on their own by the US Government, the US Army, and our elected officials, so the Veterans connected the couple with the agency, Veterans Assisting Veterans for assistance.

Helping fellow Veteran's, over fifty years after his own service in Vietnam, Don Jussaume, is truly a "Hero in Our Midst!"

The Dracut American Legion asks all World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans, to call (603) 518-5368 and sign up for an Honor Flight to the Memorials in Washington DC! Veterans of all eras are asked to go the American Legion's Web site [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org), and join the American Legion, preserving our Veteran's Benefits for future generations.



*John Cuddy served in the US Navy's Construction Battalions (also known as the Seabees) after retiring from the US Navy; he earned a bachelor's in history and a master's in economics from the University of Massachusetts on the Lowell Campus. He has been employed in Logistics at FedEx for the last 25 years. If you know a World War II, Korean War, or Vietnam War, Veteran who would like their story told, please email him at [John.Cuddy@yahoo.com](mailto:John.Cuddy@yahoo.com)*

## DEPENA FROM PAGE 4

will focus on current market conditions including the number of households that are cost-burdened and severely cost-burdened. He/she will make recommendations to preserve and create new market, workforce, and affordable housing. The goal is for the student to help Lawrence plan, launch and evaluate evidence-based local housing policies and strategies that increase access to opportunity and improve long-term health and well-being for residents.

### VACANT LAND - ASSETS

#### 3. Vacant land and real estate assets

The rescue of vacant land, excess land and abandoned structures can represent an opportunity for the economic growth and prosperous recovery of Lawrence.

Students will focus on creating an inventory and identification system of publicly owned assets e.g., land, structures, property in arrears, as well as identifying vacant land owned by others

especially anchor institutions.

For Lawrence to take advantage of this resource, it must first know what the real estate assets are and how much vacant property exists within its border, where it exists, and the condition of its supply.

Student will also examine existing organizational structures to see whether changes are for tracking, monitoring, and impactful disposition. The student will make recommendations on creating a consolidated and streamlined process for collecting data and disposing of vacant land and assets.

4. Mayor DePena, said his desire is for the students to coordinate with Department of Public Works (Director, CIP, Engineer, Water and Sewer) to compile a list of infrastructure and capital improvement projects. This information is crucial in preparation for the Biden infrastructure funding allocation. ♦

## THE DOCTOR IS IN!

### Multiple Sclerosis

Dr. Pierre Ghassibi

VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

Greetings all,

Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Lupus, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Vitiligo, and Scleroderma are very serious diseases, although they can present as a spectrum with milder manifestations in some people, and very serious in others.

We do not know the cause of these, but I have opinions. I have the right to have my opinion as long as I am upfront in admitting that I could be wrong. Let me set the stage:

People love to take supplements and get angry if you tell them not to. The same goes for cleaning agents, beauty products, vitamins, perfumes, etc. We know that the FDA does not monitor these, and their long-term effects on the body is not well known at all. Some of these products are not digested and excreted, but remain in our tissues.

The proof is that nowadays, tissue biopsies from most people are showing that our tissues contain very, very many substances that they are not supposed to contain. This is not my opinion; it is

established science. So, is it possible that our immune system that functions to attack foreign substances is starting to attack our own tissues, our own body that is imbued with foreign material?

Many athletes use all sorts of enhancing chemicals (I have seen serious liver damage from these), people use way too many detergents, antiseptics, makeup, moisturizers, etc. People do not seem to realize that chemicals are more dangerous than bacteria. Many skin problems come from too much hygiene like Pruritus Ani, and facial, vulvar and hand dermatitis. I have seen a number of children with vulvar dermatitis getting a whole workup for sexual abuse when the problem was overuse of paper baby wipes!

Asbestos, aniline dyes, tobacco. Pioglitazone. All can cause cancer!

We cannot stay away from many of these chemicals, but maybe less of them is better, as much as possible. This is too serious a fact to be ignored.

You can submit your questions or comments to Dr. P. Ghassibi, MD at [ghassibi@hotmail.com](mailto:ghassibi@hotmail.com) ♦



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**Paul Murano**  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

This month the Supreme Court justices of the United States convened with lawyers from both sides of the Dobbs vs. Jackson case; a case that might finally be the death knell of Roe vs. Wade.

The audio of the arguments for the case and the questioning from the twelve justices were aired live for the nation to hear. We won't know the Court's decision until June.

Unsurprisingly, the questioning of the Supreme Court's liberal justices seemed to reaffirm their devotion to legal abortion. These judges represent the Leftist claim that a right to abortion is found in the 'liberty' clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution. What does this mean and should it matter? Let's go beneath the surface.

According to liberal judges and politicians, abortion must be legal in all 50 states across the country because it's constitutional; and it's constitutional because, as the fourteenth amendment states, "[N]or shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law."

How does this relate to abortion? Remember, if something is not in the Constitution, the Supreme Court must always leave the decision up to the states and their respective legislatures. So, where is abortion in this phrase of the Constitution?

The short answer is that it's not there. This leads us to the next logical question: How does the Left see the word abortion

CULTURE WAR

THE VALLEY PATRIOT 15

## BENEATH THE SURFACE

### Will Roe v. Wade Finally be Overturned?

in that phrase? Their argument is twofold: a) the right to bodily autonomy, they claim, can be found in the word liberty, and b) one's right to liberty trumps another's right to life. These two claims, however, are grounded on falsehoods, the first epistemological, the second moral. In other words, they are based on a false understanding of liberty and a bad ordering of values.

When it comes to liberty, we must note the classical understanding of the term and the modern understanding – and why they're different. Liberty always used to mean the right to do the good.

This assumes there are objective goods that include the individual and society. Today liberty has been redefined to mean the right to do what one wants, without governmental interference. Notice the first is 'freedom TO' whereas the second is 'freedom FROM'.

Since the pre-modern definition of liberty presumes the reality of good and evil, in order to redefine the word modernists had to reject or ignore the objective moral order. They ended up substituting it with a utilitarian ethic. Liberty is now seen as the freedom to do what you want, without governmental

interference, as long as more pleasure than pain results from it. And it is the agent, the person doing the act according to his or her selfish interests, who gets to be the judge.

Let's see how this definition of liberty fits with the question of abortion. The person choosing the act, the mother, decides it's best for her, and perhaps even her baby, to end the preborn child's life. According to the Left, no other considerations are needed and no outside influence ought to interfere with this decision. Whether the act is good or evil, just or unjust, is not even a question.

The second problem with this new definition constructed by the Left is the moral reordering of goods that flow from it. Notice how in both the U.S. Constitution and Declaration of Independence, three basic rights are named in the order of their value. In the Constitution it's "life, liberty, and property," and in the Declaration it's "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This order follows right reason. One cannot pursue happiness without liberty, and one cannot have liberty without life. Life is the primary good from which all other rights flow.

It must be preserved and protected, by government if necessary.

In short, the reconstructed reality of the Left is built upon on redefining a key word in the Constitution and then reordering key values therein. By redefining liberty and switching the primary good from life and liberty, the argument is made that the woman's liberty trumps the child's life. This sleight of hand violates the both the Constitution and right reason.

The starkly different perspectives on abortion are often expressed as political positions, but it goes much deeper than that. The modern Leftist challenge to the traditional order of truth and justice unveils a selfishness and apathy toward neighbor, laying the foundation for a culture of death. It extends past killing one's offspring to foisting transgender ideology on children, forcing critical race theory and porn in schools, and pretending sodomy is natural human behavior that can be called marriage.

If Roe is indeed overturned in June 2022, hell will break loose, literally. Unless there is repentance and healing of heart and soul, the minds of those infected with the spiritual disease of secular progressivism will remain blinded; and their inner rage will not rest unless their lust for death is satisfied.

Paul is producer and host of Beneath the Surface video podcasts, he taught college philosophy & theology, and is a producer/writer for St. Michael's Media. Check out his website at [PaulMurano.com](http://PaulMurano.com). E-mail Paul at [PJDM@aol.com](mailto:PJDM@aol.com)



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#### ANDOVER

Rhino Andover Collection LLC, 6 Riverside Owner LLC, \$12,400,000, 6 Riverside Dr  
Stephen & Lisa Andrews, James & Stephanie Gorrie, \$1,501,646 , 16 Karlton Cir  
Dennis and Cheryl Johnson, Chad & Kerry Friesz, \$1,440,000, 17 Chongris Cir SAI Builders LLC, Heather Macaulay, \$1,250,000, 5 Tucker Rd  
Karina Rabelo & Viviane Lima, Fang Hao & Yu Zhang, \$1,135,000, 128 Andover St  
Leanne Pollitt, Gideon Cohen & Caroline Schwartz, \$1,112,000, 5 Cricket Cir  
Chad & Kerry Friesz, Sheri Radoux, \$1,070,000, 8 Sunset Rock Rd  
Jacob & Lindy & James Olds, Carolyn & Michael Bednarz, \$1,005,000 , 29 Karlton Cir  
Emily & Joel Keefe, Samuel Hutchinson & Emily Bunting, \$975,000 , 55 Lucerne Dr  
Douglas Cornell Revocable Tr & Nancy Cornell Revocable Tr & Nancy Cornell Tr & Douglas Cornell Tr, Eric Polanik & Amanda Buchanan, \$975,000, 22 Hearthstone Pl  
Matthew Brennan & Kayla Dufton, Christopher Lascelle & Severina Haddad, \$950,000 , 145 Hidden Rd  
Meghan & David Metzemaekers, Mathter & Sarah Fitzpatrick, \$937,000, 19 Arundel St  
Mary Davis, Michael & Katherine Marciano, \$885,000, 16 Timothy Dr  
Ruth Weiner Tr & 3 Mohawk Realty Tr, Thomas & Gail Buckley, \$865,100, 3 Mohawk Rd  
Pinakin & Harsha Mehta, Mariska Pierce, \$845,000, 9 Pauline Dr  
20 Sheridan Rd LLC & Robert Burnham, Jennifer Webb, \$830,000 , 20 Sheridan Rd Ma-dam Realty Trust & Gary Kress & Glenn Damon, William & Brenda Baldwin, \$825,000, 27 Bradley Rd  
Steven & Elizabeth Leed, Patricia Grant Tr & Patricia Grant 2005 Family Tr, \$825,000, 24 William St  
Carl & Patricia Anderson, Daniel & Andrea Kassner, \$825,000, 114 Bailey Rd Trevor Moore, Caroline Higgins , \$800,000, 18 Summer St Unit 4 Arthur & Irene Demoulas, Dana McCoy Tr & Ithaca Nominee Tr, \$750,000, 459 Lowell St Clinton & Elizabeth Reiser, Dat Nguyen & Thu Tran, \$730,000, 19 Argyle St Duarte Realty Trust & Richard Duarte Tr & Linda Duarte Tr, Susana Cenanovic & Gloria Carrasco, \$725,000, 31 School St Unit 1 Eberson Soares, Patrick & Katherine Burke, \$720,000, 92 Greenwood Rd FSB Homes LLC, Alicia Scarpa, \$709,000, 50 Enmore St Anthony & Caroline Adams, Vikas Shivashankar & Sowmya Shankar, \$657,000, 9 Flint Cir Nancy Pike, Stephen & Kathleen Welch, \$620,000, 82 Pine St Katherine Goldstein & Michael & Katherine Marciano, Jennifer Fecteau, \$620,000, 5 Oak St Hyesoon Kim, Buxton Redevelopment LLC, \$600,000, 35 Pearson St Denise Van Campen, FSB Homes LLC, \$600,000, 11 Walnut Ave Robert & Ann Michaels & Ann Fay, Sarah Perkins & Peter His, \$585,000, 168 Chestnut St Steven Zuccaro, Scott Johnson, \$534,000, 150 High Plain Rd Elaine Page, Daniel & Laura Zawalich,

\$525,000, 90 Summer St Aaron & Bonnie Dorlando, Jam Realty Trust LLC, \$525,000, 117 Bellevue Rd Julie Fitzgerald & Michael Motsinger, Patrick & Constance Scanlon, \$501,000, 15 Morton St John Sullivan, Anthony Sullivan, \$500,000, 75 Lovejoy Rd Arthur & Irene Demoulas, Dana McCoy Tr & Ithaca Nominee Tr, \$475,000, 69 Haggets Pond Rd Mustali & Tasneem Dohadwala & Naseem Dahod, Hongjia Li & Xiadi Gao, \$475,000, 1000 Spring Valley Dr Unit 1002 Carolyn & Robert & Razvan Popescu-Pretor, Tse Dan, \$450,000, 40 Chestnut St Unit 1 Kristen & Daniel Canterbury, Portillo Management LLC, \$435,000 , 26 Boston Rd PSJ Realty LLC, Sean Wadland, \$425,000, 1-3 Elm Ct Susan Sughrue Tr & John & Jacqueline Robinson Nominee Tr, Neil Robinson & Susan Sughrue, \$400,000 , 13 Rattlesnake Hill Rd Lisa Ryan & Mary Beth Carson, Bay Flow LLC, \$345,000, 27 High Plain Rd Louise Devincenzi, James Heise & Amy Roderick, \$340,000 , 80 Poor St Unit 1 Richard and Marie Licciardi, Jessica Chartier, \$292,403 , 16 Balmoral St Unit 403 Kristen & Wilhelm Faria , Ricardo DeMoura, \$290,000, 40 Colonial Dr Unit 40 Laura McBride & Daniel & Laura Zawalich, Mary Wirtz & Jose Silveria, \$275,000, 100.5 Main St Unit R Rocco Pasquariello, Keith & Lynn Wentzel, \$257,000, 148 Main St Unit A-216 William Bailey, James Awrach, \$249,900, 4 Longwood Dr Thomas Pappavaslio Tr & Cathy Pappavaslio Tru & Cathy Pappavaslio Living Tr, Delia Day, \$243,000, 4 Colonial Dr Unit B4-7 Pensco Trust Co & Anne Marie & Associates LLC, 275 South Main Street LLC, \$120,000, 275 South Main St Gerald Levesque Tr & Gerald Levesque Revocable Tr of December 27 2000, John & Cynthia Givens, \$12,000, 0 Marland St Arther & Irene Demoulas, Dana McCoy Tr & Ithaca Nominee Tr, \$3,150,000, 72 Haggets Pond Rd Dona Marie Kwolyk Tr & Bohdan & Dona Tr, Michael Motsinger & Julie Fitzgerald, \$840,000, 124 Summer St

**LAWRENCE**

415 South Boradway Realty LLC, South Broadway Ventures LLC, \$800,000, 405 South Broadway & 411-415 South Broadway Nicholas & Deborah Maucieri, Marlon Santana, \$760,000, 82 Oak St Ramiro Lopez, Noel Jerez, \$740,000, 199-205 Prospect St Jonathan Kuipers, Temil & Darlin Sanchez, \$730,000, 950-952 Essex St Gamaliel Vazquez, Maria Dilone & Jordanny & Mariely Hidalgo, \$700,000, 1-3 Reservoir Ter Diony Cruz-Guzman & Paopla Sanchez, Erick Bastardo, \$700,000, 27-29 Easton St Socrates & Rodolfo Leguen & Lilda Leger, Yessica Leger, \$696,800, 24-26 Oregon Ave Dale Tunstall Tr & Dale R Tunstall Revocable Tr , Angel Bone, \$660,000, 52-54 Olive Ave Aristides & Noemi Eusebio, Dominga & Estefany Mejia, \$660,000, 51 Ames St

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Virgin Bautista & Eugenio Nunez, Johanna Ortiz, \$370,000, 63 King St Millwood Realty LLC, Luis Cornieles, \$365,000, 543 Andover St Unit 5 Hector Gonzalez, Ana Richardson & Wilson Rosario, \$360,000, 222 High St Bay Flow LLC, Luis Martinez & Javier Rios, \$320,000 , 888 Essex St Gretchen M Coco & Gretchen Lamere Est, Jose Betancourt, \$300,000, 110 Genesee St Ram Gupta, Ayesha Reyes-Delacruz & Ariel Portorreal, \$280,000, 15B Crescent St Unit 10 David Beaulieu & Frederick Howard, Rosario Morel, \$255,000, 124 High St Unit 10B Frances Borrelli, I & M Red Door LLC, \$215,000, 28 Berkeley St Richard Macmulling, Gisell Salcedo & Ricardo Garcia, \$201,000, 88 Beacon St Unit 12 JP LLC, JMG Andover Street Realty LLC, \$200,000, 315-R Andover St David & Nancy Benitez, Jose Garcia, \$195,000 , 270 East Haverhill St Unit 10 US Bank Trust NA Tr, Luis Benzan, \$185,000 , 20 Knox St Unit 2 Bruce & Dennis Sargent, Luz Guzman, \$150,000, 78-80 Dracut St Unit 4 Isabel Rodriguez & Isabel & Ricardo Perez, Nancy Acosta, \$101,275, 19 Josephine Ave Art Silver, Gerald & Bridgid Pagliuca, \$70,000 , 538 South Broadway Brooks Properties I LLC, 94-104 Glenn Owner LLC, \$37,000, 94-104 Glenn St Miriam Herrera, Modesto Maldonado , \$8,000, 135 Spruce St.

#### METHUEN

MCP II Branch Street LLC, MOB-5 Branch Street LLC, \$29,500,000, 5 Branch St Eleven Eighty Beacon Properties Inc & Village Mall Inc, Shri Swamine LLC, \$12,500,000, 436 Broadway Shadi & Josiane Asmar, Rakeshkumar & Nimisha Patel, \$761,000, 18 Sevoian Dr Edward Ramos-Abreu & Maria Viloria, Robert Ortiz-Polanco & Marlennys Tejeda, \$692,000, 1-3 Walnut St Donald & Joan Misler, North East Educational & Development Supports Center Inc, \$675,000, 14 Kimball Cir Alexandrino Souza & Valeria Campos, Jennifer Peralta & Diego Brito & Diego Zhicay, \$675,000, 59 Booth Rd Diverse Real Estate LLC, Maller Almanzar, \$656,000, 86-88 Broadway Richard Davis, Yinery De Pena & Bernardo & Alba Pena, \$650,000 , 1-3 Larchwood Rd Marie Laine , Angel Arias, \$645,000, 86 Druid Hill Ave Michael Warford , Oscar Abreu & Teresa Queliz, \$620,000 , 21 Renfrew St Wendy & Michael Tomaselli , Jeffrey Deleon & Katherine Estrada, \$600,000, 195 Maple St Elizabeth Wells, Lorangel Pena, \$600,000, 17-19 Plymouth St Phillip E Kendall Nominee Realty Tr & Ann Kendall Tr, Robert Paquin Tr & Robert L Paquin Revocable Tr- 2014, \$595,000, 2 Herrick Dr Unit 1 Mark & Jean Carney, Sika & Jackie Eloi, \$589,900, 14 Palermo St Maria Koutny Tr & Sixteen- Eighteen Huntington Avenue Nominee Realty Tr, Nicole La Pietra & Luke Pereira , \$585,000, 16-18 Huntington Ave Daniel & Meaghan Sordillo, Thi &

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Veteran Kevin Trayers prepares to drive his repaired Ford Fiesta out of the school building. At rear is Will Hatley, an employment specialist with the Veterans Administration in Bedford who connected Trayers with Second Chance Cars. (Photo Courtesy Greater Lawrence Technical School)

## Greater Lawrence Tech Students Repair Vehicle for Area Veteran

ANDOVER — Superintendent John Lavoie is pleased to share that Greater Lawrence Technical School students recently repaired a car that has been donated to a veteran so that he has transportation for work.

Students, staff, and representatives of the non-profit Second Chance Cars presented the Ford Fiesta to U.S. Army veteran Kevin Trayers of Melrose. Trayers works full-time in security in Boston. His current vehicle with 180,000 miles was no longer safe, and Trayers was at risk of losing his job.

"For 32 years, people have been telling me, 'Thank you for your service.' I want to tell each and every one of you, 'Thank you for your service,'" Trayers told the group. "You have answered a call of honor."

"We want our students to have hands-on, real-world experiences," Superintendent Lavoie said. "Our students are also having that experience to help someone who truly needs help."

"It's important because this is a really good cause," said student Joshua Alcantara of Lawrence. "We're doing something for someone who needs help."

Trayers was referred to Second Chance Cars by Will Hatley, an employment specialist with the Veterans Administration in Bedford.

"Veterans face a lot of barriers, from legal issues to Social Security and child support," Hatley said. "Transportation is the number one issue. A job is important, but transportation is a basic way to get to work, and to provide support for your family."

Dan Holin, Executive Director of Second Chance Cars, told those gathered, "Because of your efforts, our community of goodness is delivering a car to a veteran in need today."

Second Chance Cars operates thanks to the donations of gently used vehicles from the public. To learn more about the nonprofit and the vehicle donation process, visit [www.secondchancecars.org](http://www.secondchancecars.org). ◊

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## YOUR HEALTH with RICK BELLANTI

# Health Risks With Drinking Diet Sodas

When you are trying to reduce the sugar and calories you consume in your diet, you may be turning like everyone else, to products with sugar substitutes and artificial sweeteners.

Artificial sweeteners and other sugar substitutes are found in a variety of foods and drinks sold as Diet or Sugar Free, including a lot of sodas sold on the market today. Just what are all these sweeteners? And what does it actually do to your body and overall health?

Diet sodas truly are the enemy of your body and is anything but "diet" so don't be fooled, it is secretly making me, you, and all of us unhealthy.

Did you know the artificial sweeteners in diet sodas have been known to trigger headaches? And if you are one of the millions of people that suffer from migraines, please look at what you are putting into your body, many people who suffer from migraines were able to pinpoint the triggers linked to their diet soda drinking.

Did you know that drinking a mixed drink of alcohol along with diet soda will get into your system faster making you more impaired quicker, because the artificial sweeter in diet sodas are known to absorb into our bloodstream faster than normal sugar?

The artificial sweetener in diet sodas trick your brain into thinking you are having something sweet; these artificial sweeteners have been shown to have the same effect on your body as sugar triggers insulin, which then puts your body into fat storage mode and of course leads to weight gain. Even though it has no calories, if you are trying to lose weight in the long run, it's just not going to happen. Most people gain weight from this and in the worst spot, your mid-section. It's also been said that people will tend to eat more calories justifying they can get away with it because their drink of choice is "diet" and has no calories, so it could be psychological as well.



Eating more food and drinking diet soda is a collision course for the makings of bad cholesterol, bigger waist and mid-section, high blood pressure, elevated glucose levels and there you have it: Type II Diabetes. Lately, there have been findings with connections to stroke and dementia, but more research is being done to find direct connections.

If you are trying to lose weight, get rid of the word "DIET" from your vocabulary, but also from the food and drinks you purchase. If the word diet is in there, then it's NOT good for you. It means they taken something out of the ingredients and replaced it with something

else and that is usually chemicals. (As in the artificial sweeteners in diet soda but also in everyday foods. Especially the worst: prepackaged food products). These items will trick your body and brain into thinking you are eating something that you are not and disrupts the body's natural ability to regulate calorie intake based on the sweetness of the normal foods. It tricks you into thinking you can overeat, and you will crave more, it's a vicious cycle and you will not lose weight no matter how hard you try.

Healthier low-calorie choices are everywhere including water, skim milk, and unsweetened tea or coffee. My favorite drink of choice is sparkling water / plain soda water with fresh pieces of fruit cut up like strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, and oranges. Keeping your body healthy with water goes way back to my very first column, drink half your body weight in water daily. You'll thank me later.

Rick Bellanti is a health and wellness columnist and is on a journey himself to lose 240lbs and has lost 160 lbs. since the start of 2015. If you have any questions or comments, please post them to his Getting Healthy with Rick Bellanti Facebook page and once a month he will address a few of the topics here. ◊

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## TV TALK with BILL CUSHING



# ‘Dopesick’

**Bill Cushing**  
VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST

‘Dopesick,’ is Hulu’s ambitious and fascinating limited series about the root cause and widespread effects of the ongoing opioid crisis in the United States, caused when the unscrupulous drug company Purdue Pharma launched its painkilling drug OxyContin on an unsuspecting American public. From the mid-1990s into the 2000s this became one of the most devastating health scandals in medical history.

Based on the book *Dopesick* by Beth Macy, the series utilizes its terrific ensemble cast to tell different parts of one compelling story. In the late 1990s’, Michael Keaton is the fictional Dr. Finnix, an Appalachian family doctor who, charmed by Purdue Pharma sales rep Billy (Will Poulter), starts handing out a new painkiller called OxyContin to his patients. Young coal miner Betsy (Kaitlyn Dever) is the first to be given the new medication. With the message that his new creation is far from addictive, Purdue Pharma’s Dr. Richard Sackler (Michael Stuhlbarg) sees the money rolling in from this new “miracle drug.” Oxy soon begins flooding the marketplace as the small cities and towns reliant on physical labor become ground zero for this growing pharmaceutical catastrophe.

Soon the monster that the Sackler’s created destroys life everywhere it goes. In focusing on a single Appalachian community, ‘Dopesick’ finds its microcosm for addiction, sickness, and death everywhere. It shows that no one is safe, not even Doctor Samuel Finnix, whose long fall into the drug’s grasp is particularly insidious. Michael Keaton turns in some of the best work of his career.

Dever is also excellent, adding another remarkable performance to her growing résumé. Her character’s fall into desperate addiction is almost too painful to watch — for us, and for her confused and agonized parents (played so

heartbreakingly by Ray McKinnon and Mare Winningham).

‘Dopesick’ connects the dots between the Sackler’s spacious boardroom and Dr. Finnix’s tiny exam room by following several plot threads, in particular a pair of assistant U.S. attorneys (Peter Sarsgaard and John Hoogenakker) who launch a four-year investigation into OxyContin, tracing how misinformation about the drug spread from the top. At one point, Purdue officials want to convince doctors to double their prescribed doses, so they invent a new condition called “breakthrough pain” to justify the increased doses (and increased profits). As viewers, we can’t help rooting for the attorneys or for Rosario Dawson as a DEA official who talks about the ‘80s crack epidemic that addicted Black people as one of the reasons she wants justice.

Adapted by Danny Strong and directed by Barry Levinson, ‘Dopesick,’ while very powerful, is certainly not easy to watch. The tension of seeing Dr. Finnix, a good man who deeply cares about his patients, be taken in by the lies about the drug’s safety is agonizing. Even so, it is riveting, and impossible to turn away.

Everyone in the world should know what Purdue Pharma knew about Oxycontin, when they knew it, and how much they profited from engineering this crisis. ‘Dopesick’ is not a television show people should watch to be entertained. It’s a show people should watch to get angry.

‘Dopesick’ is available to stream on Hulu.



If you have any questions about TV, you can email me at [BillsTVTalk@gmail.com](mailto:BillsTVTalk@gmail.com). I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future Mailbag column. Follow me on Twitter and Instagram @BillsTVTalk and on Facebook at BillsTVTalk for daily up-to-the-minute TV news and discussion. ♦

## WEATHER 101 with AL KAPRIELIAN

## Winter Driving/The Start of Winter

Welcome to December which will officially begin the winter season. The winter solstice will occur on December 21st. After this we will start to see an increase in daylight. December can be known for cold and even snowy weather. Snowstorms can occur during December.

We can also see mild days in December. Depending on the upper-level pattern (jet stream) LOW PRESHA! systems can track further north and to our west resulting in rain and not snow. Recapping November, it was the driest month since June for Boston.

Boston only got 1.34 inches of rain for December. This was 2.32 inches below normal. July, August, September, and October all had above normal rainfall. The first eleven days of November featured dry weather. On November 12th, the dry stretch broke and we had a day with flooding rains.

Normally in November we are not concerned about severe thunderstorms. This was not the case this past November. On Saturday November 13th later in the day we had a severe thunderstorm outbreak.

Severe thunderstorms caused 5 tornadoes between Connecticut and Rhode Island. Also 3 tornadoes occurred on Long Island, New York giving a total of 8. This is quite rare for the month of November. Some warm humid air was located in these areas ahead of a cold front. The cooler air behind the front clashed with this warm humid air causing severe thunderstorms which resulted in the tornadoes. This severe outbreak caused widespread power outages in these areas due to down trees and power lines. The extensive damage resulted in utility crews from areas outside of New England to arrive in these areas and help with the cleanup and restoration of power.

Looking at the temperatures in November they were not as warm as the temperatures we saw in October. Boston’s average temperature for November was 44.7 degrees which was about normal.

The two warmest days in November for Boston were on November 9th and the 18th when the high temperature reached 70 degrees. There were some other mild days in November with high temperatures in the 60s.

The later part of the month saw colder temperatures and many areas had their first frost and freeze which was much later than normal. Boston finally went below 32 degrees (freezing) for the low temperature.

Many areas saw their first snowflakes of the season on the night of November 26th into the 27th. For many areas, a coating of snow occurred on grassy surfaces. Higher snow amounts occurred in higher elevation areas. Lempster, NH got 9” of snow, Newport, NH got 6” of snow. Colder air occurred in the higher elevations and accounted for the higher snow totals. Now with winter almost here I will talk about winter weather.

To get a winter storm number 1, we need the northern and southern jet streams to phase in order for the low-pressure system to come far enough



north to give us accumulating snow.

If the northern and southern Jet streams do not phase, then the storm will track too far out to sea, and we would miss getting a snowstorm. In this case a snowstorm is more likely to occur over the mid-Atlantic states. Even when the jet streams phase we have to look at the storm track to see about the precipitation type. If the storm tracks west of us over eastern New York state, then we would get more rain versus snow because the wind direction would be more from the south bringing warm air north.

Remember, the air circulates counterclockwise around a low-pressure system. If the low-pressure system tracks south of Cape Cod & the Islands, we would have a better chance of getting all snow. Even with this track we look to see if there is a HIGH PRESHA! system to our north for example up in Montreal. If there is a high pressure in this area, then it tends to lock the cold air in at all levels of the atmosphere above the ground. The result in this case would be an all-snow event. If there is no high pressure to our north, then even with a low pressure track south of New England there could be a change to sleet (ice pellets) due to some warmer air moving in at upper levels of the atmosphere.

Also, we look at how intense the storm will be. If the jet stream has a lot of amplitude, then this can cause a more intense storm resulting in more precipitation (snow depending on the track of low pressure). Also, we look at how fast the storm will move. A faster storm will produce less snow and precipitation.

A slower storm will produce more snow and precipitation. Get ready for winter driving. If you have to travel in winter weather remember to allow extra time to get to your destination!

Also, keep the speed down! By keeping the speed down, you are allowing a greater distance between your car and the car in front of you. When it snows and the roads are slippery it takes longer for your car to slow down (braking is slower).

Will we see a lot of cold and snowstorms in December??

Stay tuned to next month’s article for the answer. In the meantime, enjoy the holiday season and happy holidays! ♦

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# Good Things Happen When You Believe God Loves You!

Peter Larocque

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

As people around the world begin to prepare for Christmas, I am reminded of what the Angel of The Lord told Joseph, who was engaged to a very young virgin girl named Mary.

We read in Matthew 1:21, "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." NKJV. This Jesus will save His people from their sins! So right in this announcement to Joseph, we read the very reason and purpose of why we all need a savior, Our sins! Sin keeps us separated from God. Nothing outside of God's Salvation plan could reconcile us, sinners to a perfect God. Only Jesus could save us! Only Jesus can save today!

Only God could take man's worst act of crucifying His Son and make it His Greatest Act of Love! We read in John 3:16-17, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." NKJV.

Why is it so difficult to believe that God could love you this much? Yes, none of us deserves this so stop feeling unworthy, get over yourself! Stop condemning yourself! The Bible says in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." NKJV. The only one with bragging rights is God Almighty and He chose to save us from our sins by His Grace!

All we have to do is Believe and Receive! It's a Gift from God! What are you going to do with all the gifts under the tree on Christmas morning? If you are smart you will open the ones with your name on them and receive them and believe that they are yours! This is how your Salvation is received. Your gift of Salvation

from God has your name on it, open it!

You may be still thinking that your sin is just too big to be saved from? Your sin is too dark and must be kept secret in the dark places of your heart! Well, if this is you, may I boldly say to you, Jesus is bigger than your sin! He came to take away your sin no matter what it is. Stop disqualifying yourself from The Gift of all Gifts, your Salvation! God loves you that much! That while we were sinners, Christ died for us! God didn't wait until we were good enough to receive His Gift! Nope, while we were sinners, Christ died for us!

So, get with the program and simply receive your gift of Salvation by believing God loves you and God gave up His Son Jesus for you to save you from your sin and take it away from you! When Jesus died, your sin died with Him and when He rose from the dead, He rose without it! Your sin debt has been paid in full and your receipt is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! Who by the way is seated at God's Right-Hand triumphing over death, death is defeated!

So, let's come out of the dark and into the Light!

Psalms 119:105, "By your words I can see where I'm going;

they throw a beam of light on my dark path." [The Message Bible.]

Good things happen to those who Believe that God Loves them! What are you waiting for??? My prayer for you all is that you begin your relationship with Jesus NOW! I didn't say get religion, I said, begin your relationship with Jesus Now!

He wants a close, up, and personal relationship with You! Yes, You!

I thank God for you all, love to you and your family,

Merry Christmas and Have a Happy and Safe New Year in 2022!

Peter Larocque  
peterlarocque@hotmail.com



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## CITY OF LAWRENCE PARKING BAN!

**EMERGENCY PARKING BAN: Alternate Parking on Certain Streets between 12:01 AM to 6:00 PM.**

The winter alternate parking ordinance shall only take effect during the dates and times specified in a "SNOW AND ICE EMERGENCY" issued by the Mayor or his/her designee, The snow emergency shall remain in effect until the Mayor rescinds it. Notice of any such rescission shall be given in the same manner as the issuance of the declaration.

Winter Alternate Parking shall mean that on the following streets, between the hours of 12:01 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., daily, vehicles shall, unless otherwise prohibited by law, be parked on one side of the street only, so that on the even-numbered dates of the calendar, vehicles shall be parked on the even-numbered sides of the streets, and on the odd-numbered dates of the calendar, they shall be parked on the odd-numbered sides of the streets: ORD 10.36.031 (\*IF YOUR STREET IS NOT LISTED BELOW, NO PARKING IS ALLOWED\*)

Abbott St	Colonial Dr	Forest St	Louisburgh St	Richmond St
Allen St (General St To Angle)	Colonial Rd	Foster St	Lowell St (Lawrence St to W. Lowell St)	Rita Lane
Allston St.	Colonial Terrace	Foxcroft St	Lynn St	Roberta Lane
Ames St. (Riverside Dr. to Haverhill St)	Columbus Ave (Haverhill St to Meadow St)	Franklin St	Manchester St	Rockwood Lane
Amesbury St	Concord St	Frost Dr	Maple St	Rowe St
Amherst St	Congress St	Furber St	Margin St	Russell St
Appleton St	Coolidge St	Garden St	Marie Lane	Salem St
Atkinson St	Copley St	Garfield St (Cambridge St to Falmouth St)	Marion Ave (except Holly St to Spicket River)	Sanborn St
Auburn St	County St	Gilbert St	Marique Dr	Sargent St
Bailey St	Crescent St	Glenn St	Mark Lane	School St
Ballard St	Crestwood Cir	Glenwood Drive	Market St	Shattuck St
Barker St	Crosby St	Gorham St	Marlboro St	Shawsheen Rd
Barnard St	Cross St	Grafton St	Marston St	Sheridan St
Basswood St	Cutler St (Chickering St to Marlboro St)	Grainger St	Martha Lane	Shepard St
Bay State Rd (McFarlin St to Mater St)	Cyr Drive	Grant Rd	Mason St	Short St (Chestnut to Maple St)
Beacon St	Dana St	Green St	May St	So. Bowdoin St
Beaconsfield St	Danforth St	Greenfield St	Medford St	Sparkle Drive
Belknap St	Dartmouth St	Greenwood St	Melrose St	Springfield St
Bellevue St	Davis St.	Groton St	Melvin St	Standish Rd
Bennett St	Debbie Lane	Grove St	Middlebury St (Olive Ave to Endicott St)	Stevens St (Mt. Vernon St to Stevens Ave)
Bennington St (Auburn St to Chestnut St)	Dorchester St	Hamlet St	Mill St	Storrow St
Beresford St	Dracut St (So. Bway to Dunstable St)	Hancock St	Milton St (Haverhill St to Bodwell St)	Summer St
Berkeley St	Dunstable St	Hawley St	Monroe St	Summit Ave
Bigelow St	Durham St	High St (Except E. Haverhill St to Ferry St)	Morton St	Swan St
Blanchard St	Durso Ave	Highgate St	Mt. Auburn St	Sylvester St
Bodwell St	East Boxford St	Hillside Ave	Mt. Vernon Cir	Taft St
Bowdoin St	East Boxford Terrace	Howard St	Mt. Vernon St	Temple St
Boxford St	East Haverhill St	Hudson Ave	Mt. Vernon Terrace	Tewksbury St
Bradford St	East Kingston St	Hurst St	Newbury St	Thomas Rd
Brookfield St	East Pleasant St	Inman St	Newton St	Tremont St
Bruce St	East St	Jamaica St	No. Parish Rd	Tyler St
Burke St	Easton St (So. Bway to Jefferson St)	Jefferson St	Oak St (East Haverhill to Short St)	Valley St
Burlington St	Eastside St	Juniper St. (For its entire length on Odd Side of street (East Side only during effective period.)	Oakland Rd	Vandergrift St
Butler St	Eaton St	Kenneth St	Olive Ave (W. Lowell St to Ames St)	Walnut St
Byron Ave	Ellis St	Kent St	Orchard St	Warren St
Cabot Rd	Elm St	Kingston St	Osgood St	Water St
Cambridge St	Emerald Ave.	Laurel St	Oxford St	Weare St
Canal St	Erving Ave	Lea St	Packard St	West Hawley St
Canterbury St	Eutaw St	Lebanon St (Hampshire St to Amesbury St)	Patton St	West Kenneth St
Carleton St (Andover St to Everett St)	Everett St	Leeds Ter.	Pembroke Dr	Westchester Drive
Carver St	Exeter Pl	Lenox Circle	Perry Ave	Westwood Terrace
Castle St	Exeter St	Lenox St	Philip St	White St
Cedar St	Exeter Terrace	Lincoln Ct	Pilgrim Rd	Whitman St
Chandler St	Fairmont St	Lisa Lane	Pleasant St (Ferry St to High St)	Wilmot St
Chester St (So. Bway. To Dunstable St.)	Fallon St	Lorenzo Rd	Portland St	Winston Dr
Chestnut St	Falmouth St	Loring Street	Powers St	Winter St
Chickering St (Cutler St. to Pilgrim Rd.)	Farley St		Proctor Rd	Woodland St
Cleveland St	Farnham St		Prospect St	
Clifton St	Ferry St		Providence St	
Clinton St	Ferguson St		Railroad St	

**ON THE FOLLOWING STREETS BETWEEN 12:01 AM AND 6:00 AM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, ALTERNATE PARKING WILL BE ENFORCED YEAR-ROUND: ORD 10.36.190**

Ames St, from Haverhill St. to Water St.

Andover St

Arlington St, from Broadway to the Methuen Line.

Broadway, from the Methuen Line to Canal St.

Canal St, from Prospect Street to Union St.

Common St.

East Haverhill St, from Steiner St. to Avon St.

Eastside St, entire length.

Essex St.

Ferry St, from Marston St to East Haverhill St.

General Street, from Prospect Street to Union Street.

Hampshire St, from Lawrence St to Arlington St

Hampshire St, from Myrtle St to Canal St.

Hampshire St, from Canal St to Arlington St.

Haverhill St, except from Jackson St to Amesbury St and Broadway.

Jackson St, from Canal St to Kendrick St and from Berkeley Street to Methuen Line.

Lawrence St.

Lowell St, from Ames St to Lawrence St.

Market St, from Loring Street to Parker St.

Merrimack St.

Methuen St, from Broadway to Amesbury St.

Methuen St, from Lawrence St to Union St.

Parker St, from Andover St to Merrimack St

Prospect St, from the Methuen Line to Canal St.

Salem St, from Emmett St to Shawsheen Road, with the exception of that portion of Salem St., between Newton St and Everett St.)

Salem St, from Emmett St to South Union St.

South Broadway

South Union St.

Tremont St, from Hampshire St to West St.

Union St.

Water St, from Ames St to Broadway.

West St.

Winthrop Avenue, from Chickering St to Parker St.

**The provisions of this section shall not apply to the portions of the following streets which are designated as State highways:**

Jackson Street, north of Berkley Street to Methuen Line-Route 110.

Riverside Drive, west of Ames Street to the Methuen Line.

Winthrop Avenue, from the junction of Osgood Street south to Interstate 495.

### **ALL NIGHT PARKING PERMITTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:**

Exterior of BREEN SCHOOL – Yard only  
CARL LINDQUIST PLAYGROUND –Emmett Street side only  
CHARLES STORROW PARK –High Street side only from Pleasant Street southerly to Storror Terrace  
JAMES F. LEONARD SCHOOL PLAYGROUND –South side  
ARLINGTON SCHOOL –Arlington Street  
Exterior of LAHEY SCHOOL – Yard only  
Exterior of ROLLINS SCHOOL – Platt Street only  
PARTHUM SCHOOL – Playground area to E. Haverhill Street

It is very important that motorists cooperate and remove their vehicles out of all public areas no later than 7:00 A.M... All vehicles will be towed away at the OWNER'S EXPENSE who fails to comply with the above time schedule. Also, all vehicles immobilized by accident, mechanical, uninsured or uninspected left on all city owned land will be towed at OWNER'S EXPENSE. Any questions, call 978-620-3350 or 978-620-3350.

*-Jorge Jaime, Director of DPW*

## REAL ESTATE: FROM 16

Raymond Phan, \$580,000, 223 Hampshire St

Roy and Jane Cole, Carol Holbrook Tr & Brian Holbrook Tr & Holbrook Family Revocable Tr, \$575,000, 4 Mcallister Way

Mary Swan, Nick Castillo, \$570,000, 159-161 Howe St

Modesto Martinez & Cristina Hernandez-Peraza, Wislaine Laurent & Emmanuel Fedna, \$565,000, 14 Palmer St

Marie Previlus, Jeremy Mora, \$555,000, 5 Westwind Dr

Elizabeth A Godek Revocable Living Tr & Elisabeth Godek Tr, Kristin Diburro & Ryan Johnson, \$520,000, 106 Butternut Ln

Donna & Paul Wilchinski, Apolinar Garcia & Marcelina De Garcia, \$515,000, 76 Maple St

Main Thige & Charity Maina, Alas & Oumou Barry, \$500,000, 120 Bay State Rd

Paul & Deborah Parent, Janice Morrissey Tr, \$499,000, 52 Jane Rd

Lucas & Nicholas Russell, Altamiro Filho & Viviane Assis, \$490,000, 45 Ayers Village Rd

Megan Donahue & Megan Medina, Vanessa Salcedo, \$477,000, 319 Lowell St

Deborah Pitocchelli Tr & Pitocchelli Family Realty Tr, Gustavo Salas & Caroline Camacho, \$470,000, 105 Bradley Ave Ext

James E Carney Sr Revocable Tr of 1997 & James Carney Tr, Katherin Mejia, \$465,000, 202 Pleasant St

William & Barbara Jensen, David Emerick & Deniene Savard, \$450,000, 62 Landing Dr Unit 62

Florencia & Mark Kisłowski, Anabel Polanco, \$450,000, 3 Francella Rd

Michael Foley & Tanya Waithe, Arianna & Joshua Andujar, \$440,000, 130 Forest St

Christopher & Lori Amico, Victor Hernandez & Leidy Baez, \$430,000, 10 Reservoir St

Christopher & Andrew Zielinski, Melissa Chalas & Pedro Hernandez, \$425,000, 65 Weybossett St

Linda Bishop, Grace Ahn, \$420,000, 61 Landing Dr Unit 61

Stephanie Martin & Suzanne Lahey, Nathalia Arboleda & Maria Sepulveda, \$415,000, 11 Hill St

Steven Caristinos, John & Cathy Smithendorf, \$410,000, 905 Riverside Dr

Fadi Bouchrouche, Eddy Rahi, \$400,000, 1 Glenway Ave

Clautide Blanc, Angel Marmol, \$400,000, 53 Arnold St

Michael Denuzzio & Patricia Preston, Bernardo Balbi & Ayanes Frias, \$400,000, 252 Oakland Ave

Melissa Branco, Aristides Eusebio, \$400,000, 13 Deering Ave

Michael & William & Virginia Barry & Mary & Kathy Stranger & Susan Lambert, Amimc LLC, \$362,500, 150 Pleasant St

Elizabeth Roberts, Neil Terrero, \$317,000, 1 Riverview Blv Unit 7-205

VMTR LLC, Elusai Lemus, \$300,000, 1 Short St

Margaret Joyce, Nousheen Hakin, \$270,000, 97 Pelham St Unit 1

Patricia A Maglia Revocable Tr & Doreen Martin-Gillian & Frank Curcio, Emma Thompson, \$265,000, 27 Constitution Way Unit 27

Kevin & Cathleen Johnson & Cathleen Haas, Property Possible Inc, \$255,000, 10 Caswell Ave

Jovanny Guaba, Denise Concheri, \$251,000, 21 Hampshire Rd Unit 21-410

Marie Hinchcliffe & Michael Gagne, Mohammad Armar & Aalisha Wahab, \$225,000, 395 Merrimack St Unit 26

Thomas & David Hajj & Judith Romano, Kim Cao, \$205,000, 46 Ashford St Unit 15

Elba Morency, Francisco Polanco, \$193,000, 52 High St Unit 4

Paul Hudson, Kenneth Hudson, \$185,000, 104 Ford St Unit E

Lisa Derusha Tr & Lisa Derusha Living Tr, Yordano Murray, \$180,000, 20 Danbury Dr Unit 20-14

CRH Realty LLC, David Deas, \$170,000, 20 Danbury St Unit 2

CRH Realty LLC, Thomas & Jade Kucharski & Nicole Summa, \$155,000, 40 Danbury Dr Unit 4

Gerardo Giugliano, New England Home Buyers LLC, \$141,000, 945 Riverside Dr Unit A

Nathan Swartz & Pierre Unitt & Nathan Swartz, Nathan Swartz, \$85,000, 69 Golf Ave

Sherry Calabrese & George Mingins & Susan & Brian Skaff, 45-49 Jackson St LLC, \$35,000, Lowell St

Eugene & Elizabeth Declercq, Utica Capital LLC, \$30,000, 28 Adelaide Ave

Toll Ma Land III LP, Robert & Linda McCabe, \$780,000, 2 Phoebe St Unit 144

McCraw Second Family Trust & Michelle McCraw Tr, Christopher & Laura Kendig, \$767,500, 5 Bramble Hill Rd

Richard Coco, Franklin Serrano & Adelyn Acevedo, \$620,000, 69 Tower St

Joseph Grande, Ana Diaz, \$550,000, 52 Linwood Ave

Charbel Bourouphael, Sucre Dominguez & Adaris Cabrera, \$460,000, 53 Merrimack St

Azores Wholesale Limited LLC, Kaisy Espinoza & Guadalupe Rivas, \$420,000, 8 Horne St

Preston & Valerie Carmichael, Flor Ortega & Oscar Depaz, \$350,000, 21 Marie St

### NORTH ANDOVER

Jeremy Finkle Tr & Jeremy Finkle Revocable Tr & Tanya Gould Tr & Tanya Gould Revocable Tr, Sandra Wroble & Robbie Robinson, \$1,200,000, 29 Blue Ridge Rd

James & Dianne Stevens, Domenic Botticelli, \$1,111,000, 31 Skyview Ter

David & Laura Feng & Laura Antonucci, Matthew & Michelina Kinell, \$1,104,000, 45 Gray St

Paul & Carol Powers, Christopher & Megan Royal, \$1,055,000, 53 Monteiro Way

Meghan Grungale, Mark & Kimberly Bethel, \$979,000, 87 Coachmans Ln

Rimpyo Hong & Sunhwa Jung, Sylvia & Jonathan Vega, \$965,000, 154 Ambergrove Rd

Joseph & Kandace Kukas, Heather & Stephen McGrath, \$939,000, 110 Laconia Cir

Kuljit & Tarlochan Kalkat, Kevin & Kendra Carr, \$925,000, 90 Lost Pond Ln

Fuller Road Realty Tr & Maureen Norman Tr, Richard Fantasia & Pia Amicone, \$892,000, 79 Fuller Rd

Susan Moreschi, Brian & Stacey Thomson, \$860,000, 95 Greene St

David & Brenda Sikora, Anthony & Lindsey Sallese, \$858,000, 521 Dale St

Ronald Cuscia, Salmon Run LLC, \$845,000, 16-22 May St

Ronald & Joanne Cuscia, Clifford & Theresa Smith, \$840,000, 69 South Bradford St

John & Amanda DeCoste, Pedro Lino, \$750,000, 537 Boxford St

Five C Construction LLC, Michael Pignatato & Allison Umlah, \$746,000, 166 Cotuit St

Anthony & Jennifer Valencia, Gregory & Lauren Ormiston, \$713,000, 11 Tolland Rd

James & Marie & Patrick & Margaret Daw & Margaret Waldron, Franklin Diaz, \$665,000, 27-29 Maple Ave

David Lind Tr & Donna Lind Tr & Lind Family Revocable Tr, Signe Spencer, \$664,000, 575 Winter St

Harmonics Realty Tr & Janice Mottolo Tr, Santosh Shrestha, \$635,000, 2-4 Turnpike St

Mary Crete, Rose Marenghi, \$635,000, 100 Adams Ave

Timothy Loughran, Chrisotpher Paolini & Sarah McAllister, \$630,000, 410 Summer St

Maureen McCarthy, Shanna & Ryan Hinckiffe, \$630,000, 393 Sutton St Unit A

Mark & Kimberly Bethel, Amnon & Shani Amit, \$610,000, 129 Moody St

David & Maryellen Johns, Hector Ortega & Martha Cebeno, \$610,000, 209 Chickering Rd

Mamta Lohia Living Tr & Mamta Lohia Tr, Krishna Revi & Vinod Mohanan, \$585,001, 284 Hillside Rd

Elizabeth W Deyo 1999 Tr & Catherine Deyo Tr & Brendan Deyo Tr, Oliver McConnell & Betty Lam, \$576,000, 64 Woodstock St

Sunil & Sunita Samtani, Hesham Raghib & Maha Elgendi, \$575,000, 62 Compass Point Rd Unit 62

Michael Robbins, Wendy Smith, \$525,000, 300 Dale St

Patrice Pappalardo, Gillian Weeks, \$520,000, 21 Davis St

Hartnett Family Tr & Linda Hartnett Tr, Pedro Reyes, \$515,000, 65 Cotuit St Unit 2

R & M Trust & Gary Lincoln & Gary Cyr Tr, Colin Callahan, \$509,850, 105 Moody St

North Shore Real Estate Solutions LLC, Rachel & Keith Canning, \$495,000, 10 Robinson Ct

Sheila Serrao, Maria Caracuel, \$480,000, 36 Alcott Way Unit 36

Jordan Burgess Tr & Suzy B Realty Tr, David Rutter & Nanett Phaneuf Rutter, \$480,000, 47 Millpond

Mariska Pierce, Jelyssa Weeks, \$470,000, 466 Massachusetts Ave

Seaport Homes LLC, Rachel Christensen, \$429,000, 127 Marblehead St Unit C

Meridith Realty LLC, Star Ridge Properties LLC, \$410,000, 60 Ashland St

Henry Abraham & Carold Belding, Hyesoon Kim, \$400,000, 22 Stacey Dr

Linda Kendrick, Kristen Nassif, \$375,000, 33 Riverview St

Thao Tran, Kelvin & Jimmy Le, \$360,000, 19 Meadowood Rd

Eric Dawson Ind Tr & Jamie Dawson Ind Tr & Dawson Family Tr, Neil Hack, \$319,900, 8A Union St

Andriy & Inna Kochura, Alyssa Yearwood, \$290,000, 39 Village Green Dr Unit 34

Helene Ryan & John Ryan Est & John Ryan Jr Est, Marie & Patrick Daw & Margaret Waldron, \$254,900, 148 Main St Unit 0-402

Paul and Carrie Woodbury, Ann & Jeffrey Liotta, \$249,900, 25 Frenview Ave Unit 10

Daniel Napoli, Aaron Griswold, \$246,265, 44 Empire Dr

Carolyn Rockwell Tr & Eleanor Rockwell Family Trust, Francisco Bonilla Tr & Carmen Heniques- Lopez Tr & Bonilla-Henriquez Revocable Tr, \$120,000, 968 Salem St

Darrin & Elaine Manke, Lisa Murray, \$997,000, 75 Granville Ln



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## SUE PIAZZA'S BOOK REVIEW

### A Question of Class (Captain Fusco Mystery Cases Series)

© by Maria Marotti 2021  
Genre: Fiction, Mystery

Bookmarks: 2.5 of 5

This is the second edition of this, the first book in Maria Marotti's Captain Fusco series.

Between Captain Fusco's wife recently dying and his being kept busy with his police work he hasn't had time for a new female relationship. Valentina, recently divorced, works in academia. Film noir. A murder takes place at the University and someone there is being framed for the act.

Tasked with investigating and solving the crime, Captain Fusco interviews Valentina. The connection between the two is immediate. She is as interested in solving the crime as he is, and she helps him. Her appearance also adds a romantic element to the storyline.

So many characters are introduced in the first couple of chapters that I had to write down their names and connection to one another. I constantly had to look back to see why so-and-so disliked their colleague or what they had in common with another character. I know that murder mysteries tend to have a lot of people for the reader to choose the culprit from but at one point I stopped jotting down names because I no longer cared. It became just too darn confusing.

Some major characters do not have alibis and that fits perfectly with their role and personality in the novel. Sometimes alibis can sound contrived like the author just threw them in to give the book some alternatives. Ms. Marotti does not do this. Her plot sequence and flow are quite good.

This author is likewise a master of description.

"... looks like a former model—somewhere in her forties, rather tall, high stiletto heels, mini-skirt that exposes her long slender legs, low cut lacy blouse, round firm boobs, luxuriant auburn hair let loose on her shoulders, and an artfully made-up pretty face."

Her in-depth details of the casts' physical appearance are balanced by her descriptions of settings.

"The room looks like a boudoir—flowery patterns on the upholstery of the couch and chairs, an imitation Chinese rug with pink borders and rose patterns, vases of red roses on the desk and on the shelves, and paintings of flowers and angels on the walls."

She includes recipes as well. However, the sexual use of "Italian cold cut artistically spread over Abigail's body and, in particular, over her well-rounded butt" left me never wanting to eat

prosciutto again. Yech! Or the fact that "she nibbles on the prosciutto slices wrapped around his ..." (male member) Sorry, but again, yech!

What I did not like was the author's tendency to flip from past to present tense. I'm not sure if this is an error or something else but I found the abrupt change distracting.

One element that was particularly annoying was the number of exclamation points! They were stuck everywhere! "Good morning, Ms. Twitman!" "Good morning, Professor Dukakis?" "Ah ... my ass! Slaves do research at their own risk!" By the time I got to page 21 I'd already counted seventeen! On page 22 there were six additional ones! (See how irritating these quickly become.)

According to one of Grammarly.com's blog posts, "An exclamatory sentence is one that expresses strong or forceful emotion, such as anger, surprise, or joy. Exclamation points are also commonly found with sentence fragments or sudden interjections."

By the time I get to page 34 I'm not concentrating on either the plot or the cast but on how many emotional utterances I'm going to find on that one page. By the time I got to Chapter Two, I was exhausted from not only reading the book but also trying to figure out how anyone could publish a book with this many grammatical marks. It's not until about page 50 that these symbols become significantly reduced resulting in a "normal" amount.

So, if you can get to page 50 without tossing the book against a wall, or pulling your hair out, you're pretty much golden.

It was difficult for me to focus on dialogue when so much of what was expressed was done with either surprise, anger, or some other emotion. The author, of Italian descent, may be used to speaking with others who express themselves with high energy but not all of us Italians/Sicilians emote with high intensity when we say things like "hello."

I would not recommend this murder mystery. Her second book in this series, The Etruscan Princess is a much better work. You do not miss any important information by reading the second book first either. This novel is a much better use of one's time and a more enjoyable read.

*Susan Piazza, a Navy veteran, is an author, columnist, and blogger. Book One in her historical American Indian series is the romance, "A Bird Call That Isn't." It can be found on Amazon at:*

*A Bird Call That Isn't : A Bird Call That Isn't ♫*

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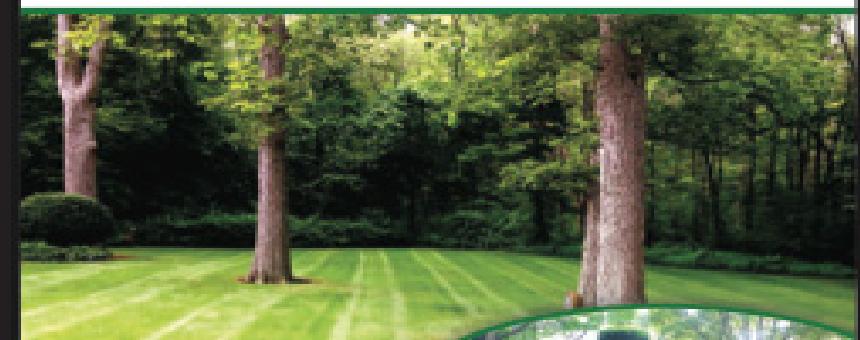
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